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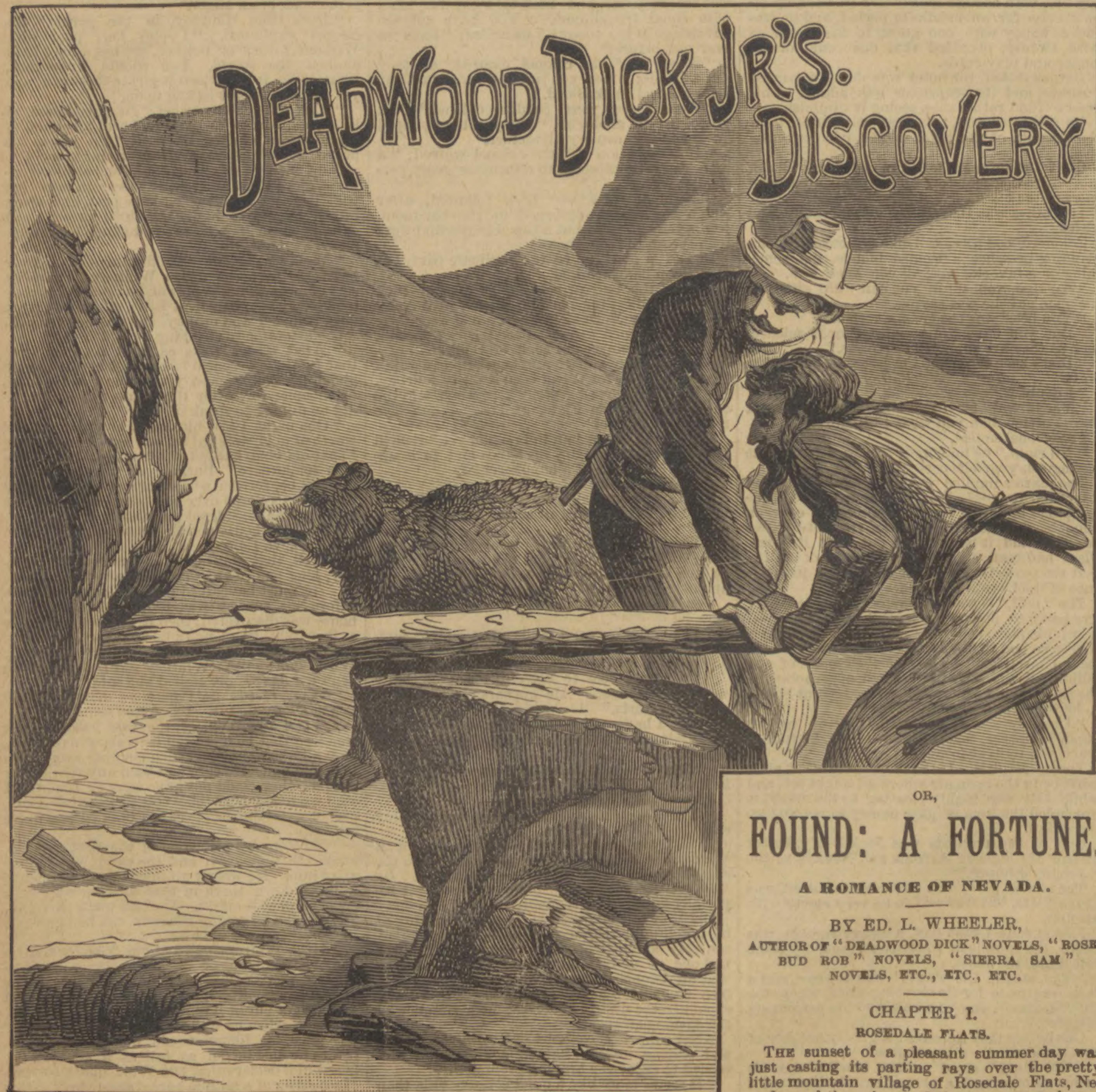
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UNDERNEATH THE GREAT ROCK THERE WAS REVEALED TO DICK'S AND OLD GRIZ'S ASTONISHED GAZE, A SMALL CAVE OR CRYPT.

## FOUND: A FORTUNE.

A ROMANCE OF NEVADA.

BY ED. L. WHEELER,  
AUTHOR OF "DEADWOOD DICK" NOVELS, "ROSE-BUD ROB" NOVELS, "SIERRA SAM" NOVELS, ETC., ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER I. ROSEDALE FLATS.

THE sunset of a pleasant summer day was just casting its parting rays over the pretty little mountain village of Rosedale Flats, Nevada, and the miners of the town were homeward wending their weary way.

Rosedale Flats considered itself to be about

the "flyest" town in all that section of country, but it was not. It was a drowsy, quiet little mining village, and nothing more. Of a summer day, such as this that was about drawing to a close, it was not hard to imagine that the town was asleep.

The miners produced only enough to keep the population from idleness and starvation; the saloons were not by any means prosperous; and the one grocery-man of the town looked lean and cadaverous, as though he had not had a square meal in a month. Still, Rosedale Flats had several well-to-do citizens, but their business was in Carson City and they had chosen this quiet little town for their homes on account of its pleasant surroundings, and comparative respectability.

About the only establishment at the Flats doing a paying business, was Old Jim Rosedale's new hotel.

When the citizens complained of hard times, "Old Rosy"—as he was called—did not trouble his head about it. Nor need he. He had made his pile in other days, when gold was to be had for the picking up, and had carefully salted it away. Now he could live at his ease, drink his own "bug-juice," and ask no odds of any one. He had put up his hotel and settled down to enjoy life, with enough money left to back up his enterprise for an indefinite period, and he was just as happy with one guest in his house as with twenty, provided that one could drink, smoke and play cards.

But, as stated, the hotel was doing a paying business, and its proprietor was adding to his reserve fund rather than seeing it diminish.

On this afternoon, two men were seated on the veranda of the hotel, engaged in conversation.

One of these men was Colonel Buck Blood, mine-owner, speculator, and general all-around sport of the town.

The other was Hen Hoon, a local bully and loafer.

Colonel Blood was a tall man of unusually commanding presence, a decided blonde, and something of a favorite with all who knew him.

"So, Hen, you think you can whip either of the men, eh?" he was saying.

"You bet," was the laconic response.

"But, you have got no professional science, such as they are supposed to possess."

"Don't keer fur that; I'm jest that boy as kin do it."

"I doubt it."

"Yer is welcome to doubt, Mister Blood; I knows better than you what I kin do."

The colonel smiled.

"All right," he humored; "chance for you to distinguish yourself, perhaps."

The matter implied in this conversation had interested Rosedale Flats for many days. The camp had been in a fever of expectancy over an announced prize-fight between two out-of-town pugilists, and it had leaked out that Rosedale Flats had been chosen for the scene of battle, that the participants might escape the interference of the Carson City police.

The "mill," it was understood, was to be for five hundred dollars a side, and gate-money—if a suitable place could be found, but no such place was to be had in the Flats. The auditory of the local church had the largest floor space of any building in the town; but, when approached on the subject, the parson had refused, point-blank, to let the fight come off there.

"Ungodly sons," he cried, putting up his hands in horror, "is this what I am here for? to teach you to fight instead of pray?"

That settled it. If the fight came off at all it must be in the open air where all might see, and while this was highly pleasing to the many, it precluded the item of gate-money in making up the stakes.

One of the pugilists was Jack Duffy, better known throughout Arizona and Nevada as the "Johnny Jumper."

The second party was unknown to the citizens of the Flats, but was said to be very clever with his fists.

Just at sunset that day, a heavy rumble was heard, the rumble of wheels, and the daily stage rolled into the Flats.

"The stage! the stage!" was the cry, and a rush was made for its stopping-place, where the old "hearse" came to a halt, and the passengers alighted.

One by one they appeared, a goodly number of them, and mostly all strangers.

"Old Rosy" stood on the hotel piazza, his arms akimbo and a grin of satisfaction on his grim old face.

"Looks like you are going to have a houseful, Rosy," suggested Buck Blood.

"Yas, et do that," the landlord agreed.

"Have you got rooms and grub and juice enough?"

"You bet. Let 'em come. I can attend to a regiment of 'em, and not half try, either."

"I say, Buck," suddenly observed Hen Hoon, "I wonder who them fellers aire that's comin' up ther slope there in advance of the rest. There is five or 'em, and they is sports, I opine."

"I reckon they are," the colonel agreed; "but they are strangers to me."

"It's ther prize-fighters, I allow," conjectured Hoon.

"You may be right. I believe they were to arrive some days before the battle, in order to complete arrangements and rest up."

As the party drew near, the colonel exclaimed:

"I believe I know that fellow ahead."

They came on, and soon reached the piazza, and the colonel at once rose and advanced, extended his hand, and said:

"Haven't I the honor of greeting Deadwood Dick?"

He it was.

"That's myself; or, rather, what's left of me, after riding in that old trap for such a distance," was the response, and Dick held out his hand with equal friendliness. "You have got the advantage of me, though," he added; "have we ever met before?"

"Why, yes," the colonel assured, as they shook hands; "met you once at Virginia City. I am Colonel Buck Blood."

"Well, I beg your pardon, colonel," Dick proceeded to apologize, "but you have slipped anchor in my memory altogether."

"Don't mention it," the colonel waived; "a man can't be expected to remember every person he meets."

General introductions then followed, after which the party adjourned to the bar-room, where they lingered but a few minutes and were then shown to their rooms.

It had proved to be the pugilistic party, as Hen Hoon had surmised.

Besides the two principals, Deadwood Dick and Jack Duffy, the party consisted of Johnny Webb, Harry McDaniels, and Pete More.

The last-named was Deadwood Dick's second. Once in their room, Dick and his man proceeded to take a bath and brush up generally. They needed it, for it had been a dusty journey.

"Well," observed Pete, "here we are in the camp of Rosedale Flats, at last. What d'ye think of the place?"

"I haven't formed an impression yet," replied Dick, proceeding to dry his hands and face upon a towel the size of a handkerchief.

"Ever been here before?"

"No. I've traveled on all sides of Carson City, too, but I never ran across this town before."

"Kind of an old-fogy place, I guess; but, what of that? That is what we want. We will be free from police molestation here, you see, and everything can be done on the quiet."

Deadwood Dick shrugged his muscular shoulders.

"The battle may not come off at all," he said.

"Why not? You don't think that Jack will do the flunk act?"

"I wouldn't like to bet either way on that," was the response. "He appears rater nervous and out of sorts."

"Yes, I have noticed that; but, as challenger, he hadn't ought to be skeered at this stage of the game."

"If he loses, you know, he loses all he has got in the world."

"I was not aware of that."

"Nor was I, until I heard him tell Johnny so."

Dick Bristol certainly was a handsome man when dressed up, and when he descended to the supper-room he attracted instant attention. He was the observed of all observers, and was especially admired by the ladies.

Old Rosedale had several families boarding at his hotel for the summer, who returned to Carson City late in autumn. Each of these families had one or more eligible daughters; and now that an Adonis had arrived, there promised to be a rivalry among the young ladies to see who should be the first to make the acquaintance of the dashing stranger.

After supper, Dick went out upon the piazza, and seating himself, lighted a cigar and proceeded to enjoy the bracing evening air.

"It seems more like a quiet country villa than a hotel in a mining-camp, and I rather like it," he mused. "If Jack, my opponent, does not do me up too badly, shouldn't wonder, but that I

may conclude to finish out the summer here, and rest."

He was soon joined by Colonel Blood, who seemed to have taken quite a liking to him.

"Ah! enjoying yourself, I see!" the colonel exclaimed, dropping into a seat.

"Well, yes," Dick responded. "Your summer nights here at Rosedale Flats are very pleasant. I am an ardent admirer of Nature and like to sit, on an evening such as this, and wander off into dreamland. It is not often I have such an opportunity."

"You are on the move pretty much all the time, I presume."

"Well, yes. It would be hard for me to say when I have had a whole week of quiet and rest."

Just then the tinkle of a piano broke the evening stillness, followed by a clear, flute-like voice, warbling a snatch of opera.

## CHAPTER II.

OLLIE WHITNEY.

DEADWOOD DICK listened in amazement.

The colonel seemed to enjoy his surprise.

"Who is that singing?" Dick demanded. "It is the voice of an angel!"

"It is Ollie Whitney, in the parlor," the colonel explained. "I pity her, poor girl. Without father or mother, she has a hard fight against the world. You should know her, Bristol; she is the sweetest girl in this town, and yet one of the least looked upon."

"Yes? tell me about her," Dick requested, as he leaned back in his chair and sent a column of cigar smoke curling upward; "I'm just in the proper mood to enjoy an entertaining story."

Now, if there was one thing Colonel Blood enjoyed more than another, it was to go rambling back into the archives of time past and bring bits of history to light. He took pretty good care, however, not to throw too much light upon his own past life.

"Well," he began, "the first man to discover pay signs here was Jason Whitney. He was a sort of wandering genius and as shrewd as they make 'em; but, he wks a little, shriveled-up old cuss, crippled and cranky, and no one ever paid much attention to anything he said or did."

"What struck folks as most peculiar was, that he always seemed to have plenty of money about his clothes, and yet had no visible source of income; for, after this camp was struck, he did no mining to speak of."

"One night I saw him get a hundred dollars' worth of gold weighed in, and says I to myself: 'That old chap has got a little gold hill of his own somewhere.' But, no one suspected where it could be, for the whole surrounding country had been explored over and over again, and this locality was considered practically n. g."

"See that house yonder, on the cliff?"

"I believe I discern it."

"Well, that was built and tenanted by Whitney, long before any one knew anything about it. He must have lived there at least two years before his retreat was found. As soon as the house was discovered, then it was set down for a fact that there must be gold here, and prospectors flocked in and the camp was struck. When questioned, Whitney did not pretend to deny it. He simply smiled and said:

"Yes, there's gold here, no doubt of it, if you can only find it. I've found some."

"When the facts of the case leaked out, it was seen that he had been here about five years, and all that time had been pegging away with pick and pan. If there had been any rich placer pockets, they could not have escaped him, for I venture to say that the whole of Rosedale Flats, except rocks and timber, has been rocked in his cradle.

"Old Rosy here was one of the first settlers, after the discovery, and the camp was named after him. He wasn't a miner then, but opened a hotel down there in that shebang where the stage stopped to-night. He had made his pile, and his idea of taking life easy was being owner and proprietor of a hotel.

"Jason Whitney had but one friend whom he made a confidant of—a queer old galoot like himself, named Dodd. He was tight-tongued as to Whitney's affairs, and nothing much could ever be got out of him. Once in a great while, however, when he was about two-thirds full of bug-juice, his tongue would move. The night before he died he got as full as a goat, and I heard him declare that Old Whit had a fortune of a quarter of a million buried somewhere in this vicinity, and that it was all to go to his daughter when she married according to the terms of his will, which was buried with the treasure. That's

all I could find out, for the old man shut up and staggered home, and the next day he died.

"And as for Whitney, he was found dead in the mountains a few days later, but nothing was found upon his person to give any clew to where the buried treasure was located. Nor did the search at his house reveal anything. Poor Ollie was left alone, and almost penniless, but not friendless. The citizens of the camp made up a little fund for her, and found her a place to board. Later on, when Old Rosy put up this big hotel, he made a fair offer and she accepted it. That offer was that if she would make her home here, and play the piano for the amusement of the guests and make herself useful to Aunty Rosedale, he would give her a home as long as she wanted to stay, and would pay her a little something besides.

"There, Bristol, that is the story. We have not quite given up hopes of finding that fortune yet, however."

Deadwood Dick was interested.

"Do you think it will ever be found?" he asked.

"That's hard to say. No doubt it will come to light sometime, but maybe not in our day."

"Maybe not; and since the girl is not destitute, but seems to have a good home, I cannot see that she is doing so badly. By the way, did I understand you to say that she had always lived here? If so, where did she learn to play and sing as she does?"

"Ha! did I omit that point? I didn't mean to. No, the girl had been here only a few months when Old Whit died. She had been in some school out East."

"That's better," observed Dick. "We can't gather grapes from thorns and figs from thistles, you know."

"Right you are. And you are right about the girl's not faring badly here, but she is not happy. She is most always in a melancholy mood, as though brooding over some secret trouble."

"What do you think it can be?"

"Give it up."

"Is she in good health?"

"Apparently. She takes plenty of exercise on her horse, and comes back from her rides as fresh and pretty as the mountain pink."

"It is a little strange."

"There's one thing," said Blood, meditatively, "and that may have much to do with the case."

"What's that?" Dick asked.

"Snubbery."

"Eh? What? How's that?"

"I said snubbery. Most of those grandy dames you saw at the table to-night are the wives and daughters of rich men of Carson and Virginia. They are a little set or coterie by themselves, to the exclusion of Ollie, who is as good as the best of them, but whom they snub at every chance."

"Shameful."

"Of course it is."

"But, does she really mind it?"

"She wouldn't be a woman if she didn't. They're born that way. If she were to come into her fortune suddenly, all would be different; or if she were to get married to some fellow with plenty of rocks; and I tell you it would please me most to death to see it happen either way."

"Why don't you marry her?"

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

"It wouldn't do," he said.

"Why not?"

"Because I've got five or six hitched fast to me now."

Dick laughed.

"You are well fixed," he observed.

"Yes, hang it. Why, I see pretty girls every day that I might try to capture if it wasn't for the old stock on hand. Say, though, Bristol, this is a chance for you to try your luck."

"I don't know about that," Dick jokingly returned. "I haven't taken an inventory of my own stock lately, and don't know whether I have got more than the law allows or not. By the way, does Miss Whitney derive any income from the house over yonder?"

"No. We have tried in vain to rent it for her, but everybody seems to have a queer suspicion against it. They say it's haunted."

"What fools!"

"You are right. A new one is born every day."

"I believe you. What can the place be rented for, per month?"

"Why, think of renting it?"

"I might."

"You?"

"Yes."

"What would you do with it, I'd like to know?"

"Oh, fix it up and live in it. I have an idea that I may spend the rest of the summer here."

"I believe you think of hunting for Old Whit's fortune," the colonel bluntly declared.

"I may devote some spare moments to that. But you have not answered my question."

"Oh! about the price. I don't reckon she will overcharge you. Wait here, and I will go and see her about it."

The colonel rose and went into the parlor, soon returning accompanied by Ollie Whitney.

She was a young lady of eighteen, of medium height, and quite slender. Her eyes were blue, and her hair a rare shade of nut brown. Her face was pretty, pensive, and sweet.

Dick rose and threw away his cigar, and Colonel Blood introduced him.

"Did you wish to see me, sir?" Ollie asked.

"Yes," Dick answered. "I was talking with Mr. Blood about your house, and would like to know for what price per month you will rent it."

"Do you want to take it?"

"Yes."

"What use will you make of it?"

"Why, I will live in it, of course," Dick replied. "I was just saying to the colonel that I believe I will spend the rest of the summer here, and such a house will just suit me."

"Have you been over to see it?"

"No, but I am willing to take all risks."

"I think you had better go over and examine it before we talk about terms. It may not suit you, for it is no pleasant home for a woman, and—"

"Oh! but there is no woman in the case!" Dick hastily informed. "I am not married, but intend to set up a bachelor's hall. That is to say, I will if I decide to stay here."

"Well, it is not a very desirable place anyhow, sir," the young lady insisted, "and I will not rent it to you until you have seen it. You might be sorry of your bargain."

"No fear of that, but let it be as you wish. Have you keys?"

"There are no keys; the doors never had any locks."

Some further remarks were exchanged, and then the colonel escorted the lady back to the parlor, and as he did not return within a few minutes, Dick left the piazza and strolled away down the slope toward the "flats" proper, where most of the village was situated.

### CHAPTER III.

#### AN UNEXPECTED FIND.

DIRECTLY across the gulch from the big hotel, on a similar knoll, was the situation of the Whitney house.

This was on the north side of the "flats," the hotel being on the south.

Between the two bluffs ran a little creek, which bent in close to the knoll on the north side, where it was spanned by a rustic bridge.

From this point the path to the house led up the slope.

Deadwood Dick lighted a fresh cigar as he descended into the gulch, and as he walked along he meditated:

"I believe I will go over and take a look at my proposed new investment. It is hardly the proper time for such work, I know, but that does not greatly matter, provided that I can beg, steal, or borrow, a lantern."

When he reached the flats he entered the one general supply store of the town and bought a lantern, and when it had been filled and lighted he set out upon his nocturnal visit to the Whitney house, crossing the little bridge and following the path that led up the slope.

When Dick arrived at the house he found it to be a substantial frame building, two stories high. There were a door and two windows in front on the ground floor, and two windows above. The door was standing wide open.

After a casual survey of the exterior, Dick advanced to the door, but he came to a sudden stop.

There, on the door-sill, a huge cinnamon bear lay stretched out.

"Hello! here is a go!" Dick exclaimed; "a tenant here in advance of me, eh? This won't do. We shall have to test the matter, Mr. Bruin, and see who has the best right here."

The bear was a monster, and was evidently fast asleep, for it made no stir.

"I don't know whether to tackle him or not," Dick muttered. "They're nasty critters to encounter, when they are hungry. I've got only my revolver and knife, and I'm afraid I wouldn't stand much of a show."

Drawing his knife, nevertheless, he stole for-

ward until he was within a foot of the bear's head.

Still the animal moved not.

It was now that Dick made a discovery. The bear was dead! Not dead as mortals die, never again to return to this life; not cold, stiff and lifeless; oh, no; for he was breathing heavily. The truth of the matter was, he was dead drunk!

Dick first came to this conclusion when he flashed his lantern into the interior of the house. The door opened into a room, and the floor of this was bestrewed with empty and broken whisky bottles.

Evidently, while on a foraging expedition about the place, Mr. Bruin had found a bonanza, and had proceeded to make the best of it.

"By Jove!" Dick muttered, "if I can only find some rope I'll take the big fellow alive. That would set me all right at the Flats."

He stepped softly over the bear and entered the house, and not pausing to examine any of the rooms in front, made directly for the rear.

After a short search in the kitchen he found some rope, and going back, proceeded to bind his Honor—Mr. Bruin.

It was not an easy task, for he had to move the big brute about in order to get its feet together, but the bear slept through it all, and in due time Mr. Bruin was so securely bound that there was little chance for his making his escape.

Dick had even taken the precaution to put a muzzle on the animal, so that it could not gnaw off the bonds.

"Jove! but there will be a howl when the old fellow wakes up," he laughed. "He will let people know that he is around. I guess he is all secure, and now I will take a ramble through the house and see what's to be seen."

Taking up his lantern, he set about it.

There was not much to be seen. This room, the one in which the bear was found, and which was evidently intended to be the parlor, was unfurnished. The next, into which it opened, was the same, except that it held a table and three chairs. The third room, the kitchen, contained a cupboard, a cook-stove, and some common articles of furniture.

A visit up-stairs discovered two rooms with beds in them, and nothing more. Apparently, the Whitneys had lived here in a very primitive manner.

Dick next went to the cellar and took a careful look around.

"Misers, when they bury their fortunes, generally select the cellar as the place," he mused. "I don't know how it was with our good friend Whitney. He may have been an exception to the rule."

There was nothing in particular, however, to indicate that Whitney had deposited his "booty" in the sandy ground that formed the cellar bottom.

That other prospectors, or treasure-hunters, had been there before was evident, for the whole bottom had been dug over and over again, until it looked like a garden ready for the planting.

"I guess there is nothing to be found here," Dick thought, "and I have done about enough skylarking for one night, anyhow. I'll go back to the hotel and go to bed, for I must keep in trim for the coming event."

He turned and went up to the floor above, and so on out of doors.

The bear was still holding the fort in the doorway, sleeping soundly on, and oblivious to his surroundings.

"You will keep where you are till morning," mused Dick, "and then I'll take you over and sell you to the hotel man."

Leaving the bluff, he descended into the gulch, where he lingered a few minutes, sauntering about to see what was to be seen, and then he ascended the other side to the hotel.

The first man he met there was Pete More.

"Where have you been off to now?" Pete demanded.

"Oh, only taking a little stroll about the town," was Dick's response.

"Funny I didn't find you, for I was down there looking all around for you, and have just come up."

"Nothing funny about it, that I can see; you simply didn't look in the right place, that's all."

"Well, you want to look out where you go, Dick, for no knowing what sort of a trick may be played on you. I can't afford to let you lose that fight, and you promised to put yourself under my control."

"Yes, I know I did, but to tell the truth, I haven't thought much about it since. Here I

am, though, all safe and sound, and you may do what you please with me. 'Have a weed?'

Pete took the proffered cigar, and they went into the bar-room together.

"Where are the others?" Dick asked, glancing around and seeing that none of the fighting party was there.

"Gone to roost, I guess," Pete answered.

They sat down, and Dick inquired:

"Well, anything arranged yet?"

"Yes, everything is fixed," Pete informed.

"Ha! that's good. What's the programme?"

"The mill is to come off at sunrise to-morrow, down on the flats near the bridge. Couldn't get any building big enough, so it will have to be fought in the open air."

"Soon as that, eh?"

"Yes. You see the other side is gettin' nervous, thinkin' that the police or the sheriff's men will get wind of the affair, and come over and put a stop to the proceedin's."

"Well, the sooner it's over the better, perhaps."

"I agree with you."

"It has been a great bore to me all the way through," Dick declared. "I'd rather give Jack the stakes than meet him, but he won't have it that way. Ever since I took a fall out of him one night down in Arizona, he has been bothering me to fight him, and in order to get rid of him I at last agreed to meet him. I'll be glad when it's over, though, even if I get the worst of it."

"Don't talk like that, for the battle is yours if you only handle yourself right."

"And I'll try to do that. Is it generally known that we are going to meet?"

"Oh, yes: but as everybody here is anxious to see the mill, no one is likely to bother us."

Just then they were joined by Colonel Blood.

"Hello! here you are, eh?" he exclaimed. "You slipped away from me nicely, didn't you?"

"I thought you had found more agreeable company and were not coming back," Dick responded, "so I set out for a little stroll."

"Why, I was gone only a few minutes. I merely stopped to pass a few remarks with Miss Ollie, and then came right out, but you had vanished. If I had known you intended going for a stroll, I would have gone with you. Which way did you go?"

"Accept my apology, then, for taking leave so abruptly. Why, I went up to take a look at the Whitney house."

"Ha! did you! Well, what do you think of it?"

"Why, it is all right, so far as I can see, and I'm going to take it."

"Saw no ghost, eh?"

"Nary ghost. Have you ever seen one there?"

"No."

"Do you know any one who has?"

"No."

"Then this haunted house is about like all of them, I take it; nothing to it but imaginings in some weak, superstitious minds."

"Very likely you are right."

"Why, of course, I am. Do you take any stock in the story?"

"No, none at all. I never saw a ghost, and never want to. There are men in this town, however, who are willing to swear that they have seen lights up there at different times, and have heard uncanny noises there after night."

"Well, that does not frighten me. They'll see more lights, after I move in, and maybe hear more noises, too."

The matter was passed off with a laugh, and when they had finished their cigars Dick and his second retired to their room to get a night's good sleep.

An hour later the house was closed and dark.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### OLLIE'S TRIUMPH.

WHEN a new day dawned upon Rosedale Flats matters had changed for the worse, that is to say—matters respecting the weather.

The sky was overcast with sullen, frowning clouds; a fierce, bitter wind was blowing, bringing with it sheets of rain; the temperature was something wintry.

Doors and windows had to be closed, and fires were needed to make one at all comfortable.

Deadwood Dick was the first one up in the house, except Old Rosy, who was behind the bar fixing himself up a hot drink when Dick went down.

"Hello! young man, what do you think of this?" the old fellow demanded.

"I don't think well of it, I can tell you," Dick

responded. "I was complimenting you on your pleasant climate last night, but I'll be blown if this looks much like it."

"Oh! we do have these spells once in a while, but not often."

"I should hope not."

"It looks like that leetle matter of yours will have to be postponed. No use tryin' to do anything in this weather."

"Worse luck," Dick growled. "I was in hopes that it could come off and be done with."

"It will be a big disapp'nt for ther Flats."

"No doubt about it."

In a little time the house was astir, and the demand for hot drinks was active.

"Never sold so many hot whiskies before at one time," the landlord observed to Dick, when the latter came out from breakfast, he having partaken of the meal in advance of the other guests.

"It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," Dick returned.

When the ladies came down to breakfast every one wore a wrap of some kind, and they denounced the weather as simply horrid. The clerk of the weather bureau was severely censured.

After breakfast was over, all hands adjourned to the parlor, where Ollie Whitney was prevailed upon to render several pieces upon the piano.

She played elegantly—in truth not another lady in the house could approach her either in playing or singing, and this fact, perhaps, had much to do with the "snubbery" of which Colonel Blood had spoken.

During the forenoon Adonis Dick received introductions to the different young ladies of the elite coterie, and soon found that he had his hands full. They buzzed around him like bees, and Dick soon began to wish that he had not entered the parlor at all.

Finally he managed to break away from them, however, and escaped to the bar-room, where he settled himself down to spend the rest of that nasty day over his cigars and some of Old Rosy's choice vintage.

All of the fighting party had the blues, and were in despondent moods. The storm still raged, and showed no signs of abating.

When noon came Deadwood Dick did not feel hungry, so he did not go in to dinner with the others. Besides, he wanted a chance to talk with Ollie Whitney.

Glancing into the parlor, he saw that she was there.

He entered, and drew her into conversation.

"You do not dine to-day, eh?" he observed, taking a seat near her.

"Not with that set," the girl responded, her eyes flashing. "I am supposed to eat at the first table, and generally do, but these persons are altogether too big-feeling to suit my style, and I prefer to dine alone. But, of course they are right, for I am a servant here, as I suppose you know?"

"I have been told that you make your home here."

"Yes, as an employee. I am paid to play, and to help Aunty Rosedale in her duties of hostess."

"But they will devour all the good things, and you will get left."

"Oh! no fear of that. Aunty Rosedale looks out for me."

"Ah! I see. Well, that is good. So you and the lady guests of the house do not hitch very well."

"No."

"Why not?"

"Well, they think they are better than I am, and that is where they and I do not agree. I think I am just as good as any of them."

"Of course you are," declared Dick, "and perhaps a good deal better. Wealth, like charity, often covers a multitude of sins."

"So I have heard. Have you been over to see the house yet? But how foolish for me to ask! I might know you would not go in such a storm as this."

"But I have been there."

"You have!"

"Sure."

"When?"

"Last night."

"And all alone?"

"To be sure. Why not?"

"My! I should think you would have been afraid!"

"So, you have a superstition of the place, too, eh?"

"Yes, I must own that I have."

"No, I was not afraid; I am not so great a coward as that, I hope. I had quite an ad-

venture, however, and— But, there, I had forgotten all about my prisoner!"

"Oh! tell me all about it. An adventure—a prisoner. Did you see and capture a ghost?"

"Oh, no, there was no ghost about it. I am proof against ghosts, and I'm going to take your house. How much do you want for it? I'll tell you about the adventure presently."

"Is ten dollars a month too much? What little furniture there is in the house goes with the rent."

"Not a cent too much, and here's the pay for two months. It is a bargain, and when I move in and get settled you must come over and see me, and see how nicely I can get along with the ghosts."

Ollie took the money with thanks, putting it into her pocket.

"Well, I hope you won't be sorry of your bargain," she said.

"Oh! I guess there's no danger."

"And now tell me about your adventure."

"Yes, I will do so. When I got to the house last night I found it in the possession of a stranger. It was not a ghost, either, but something a good deal bigger. In truth, the fellow was a good deal bigger than I am myself, and a tough-looking customer to deal with. At first I was tempted to shoot him, but on second consideration I concluded not to kill him but to capture him, if I could; so I got some rope and soon had him securely bound."

"Who was he, though?" Ollie demanded, her eyes wide open with interest.

"I didn't learn his Christian name," Dick answered, "but I give you my word for it that he was the biggest bear that I ever set eyes on."

At this juncture Ollie burst into a peal of silver laughter.

"What are you laughing about?" asked Dick.

"Was the bear asleep?" Ollie questioned.

"Yes, and as drunk as a lord."

The young lady went off into another paroxysm of laughing.

"Well," remarked Dick, "if you will tell me what you are laughing about, perhaps I can laugh too."

"Why, it is nothing much," Ollie explained, "only that wild and ferocious animal you captured is Old Bob."

"Who is Old Bob?"

"The pet of every man, woman and child in the camp. He formerly belonged to pa, who brought him up from a cub, and trained him. Why, that bear wouldn't harm a kitten. He is as kind and gentle as a lamb, and a great pet."

Naturally, Dick looked and felt not a little chagrined at this explosion of his heroic adventure.

"Well, I could not know that it was a tame bear," he exclaimed, "and more's the wonder I did not kill it."

"I'd never have forgiven you if you had," Ollie declared.

"But, you would not know who had killed him."

"Wouldn't I? You would have told me about it, just as you have done. Anyhow, I should have suspected, for no one else would be likely to go near the place."

"Well," Dick promised, "I will make amends by going over and releasing the captive as soon as the rain lets up a little. By the way, Miss Whitney, I wanted to ask you what you know about your father's buried fortune?"

"Nothing."

"Do not think that I ask the question idly. I have taken a notion to hunt for it a little, and I may be lucky enough to find it. If I am, then you will be able to enjoy a little sweet revenge upon these ladies who have been treating you so shabbily. I give you my word of honor that I would turn every penny of it over to you—"

"Oh! sir, I have no thought that you would do otherwise," Ollie interrupted.

"Have you no idea where it may be found?"

"Not the slightest, or I should have had a search made for it ere this."

"Are you sure that your father had a fortune to bury?"

"Oh, yes. He mined a great deal of gold along this valley, and converted it all into money. He used to keep it in an old chest, but not long before his death he took it from there and hid it somewhere else. 'It will all be yours one of these days, if you follow my wishes,' he would say to me, 'and before I die I will tell you where it is.' But that fatal fall he got from the rocks up in the mountains prevented his telling me or any one else."

"Have you any idea how much money he had?"

"A good many thousands, I should say."

"You had not always lived with him here in the West, I am told."

"No; I came here from Newburg, New York, where I spent several years in a boarding-school for young ladies."

"And that explains how you came to play and sing so well."

"You like my playing, then?"

"I do; and while the upper-ten are at dinner, won't you favor me with a little song?"

"I will try, if it will please you," she said, and glided gracefully away to the piano.

Now was the hour of Ollie Whitney's triumph. She had unwittingly captured the attention for a moment of the handsome young stranger. She knew that all the other young ladies were eager to make a conquest, and it pleased her to play to him alone, if it would but excite the envy of these gay young birds of wealth and fashion. So she sat down at the piano and darted off into the mysteries of an exceedingly difficult selection, putting forth all the vehemence of a German master in the heavy parts, and then grading down to a lightness of touch that a fairy might envy. When she had done, the entire house seemed echoing with melody.

"And now a song, please," Dick requested.

Ollie ran her fingers lightly over the keys in prelude, and then her pretty throat swelled in song, sending forth that soft, flute-like voice that had so charmed Dick when he heard it first. The song was one with which he was familiar, and when it came to the chorus he lent his rich, baritone voice with telling effect. The guests soon began to flock in from the dining-room, but they were too late. The song had ended.

"There," said Ollie, as she closed down the lid of the piano and arose, "I guess you will do for now," and she glided away, while Dick returned to the bar-room and sat down to reflect.

## CHAPTER V.

### OLD ROSY'S CAUTIONS.

"BLAMED nice girl, that," Deadwood Dick mused, "and I fancy I like her too well. This won't do, Richard! I thought you had got over your early susceptibilities. Here you are, though, thinking soft of a girl you have not known twenty-four hours. Verily, Richard, this won't do. You must put on the break."

"Waal, this kinder looks as if we were goin' to have a spell of weather," remarked Rosedale, coming from behind the bar and taking a seat beside Dick, business being dull just then; "how's yer think about it, Bristol?"

"Well, it strikes me that we are getting it already," Dick responded.

"Yas, I reckon the old equinox hev slipped her halter afore her time, and is goin' to have a jamboree."

"Do you often have such rains?"

"No. We get a shower once in awhile, but it don't amount to much. Even a sizable shower, though, gits the creek down thar in the gulch upon her ear, and she raises a devil of a time. I don't know what this storm may do. If it keeps on pourin' thar'll be a flood in dead earnest, and them folks on the flats will have to move."

"You're all safe, up here."

"You bet. By the way, hev you rented the Whitney house?"

"Yes."

"Not afeerd of ghosts, eh?"

"Nary. That is all nonsense. You must have a brave lot of ducks in this camp, if they take stock in such rot. I am told they are afraid of the house after the sun goes down. Must be a lot of cowards."

"You'd best talk easy on that line, Bristol," the landlord cautioned.

"Why so?"

"You might be overheard."

"And what of that?"

"It might be the start of your gettin' into trouble."

"Explain yourself."

"Waal, there is a band of six men in this camp who is bound together to look after the peace of the town. I'm jest givin' you a p'inter on the quiet, you see. They are called the Social Six. They do their work in secret. You kick up a row, or incur their displeasure, and they attend to you. They don't act openly, and nothin' is done to you publicly. The citizens wouldn't molest you, but the first you know you find yourself a prisoner of the Six, and you receive punishment from them."

"Nice state of things, that," Dick commented. "I think I'll talk about as I please, and run the risks. Of what does this punishment consist?"

"I don't know; but them that's been through

ther mill come back lookin' as though they'd been dragged through a knot-hole."

"I think I'll make it my business to look up this gang," said Dick. "There is no law to countenance such proceedings, and so this Social Six are outlaws."

"You hadn't best do anything of ther sort."

"Why not?"

"Because, you'll only git yourself inter trouble, and your life may pay ther forfeit."

"Oh! I am not at all afraid of that. I have been through too many rough experiences. By the way, Mr. Rosedale, I presume you were acquainted with Jason Whitney, the father of your pretty song-bird."

"Yas, I was."

"What kind of character was he?"

"Mighty eccentric."

"In what way?"

"Well, he was a miser, for one thing, except so far as concerned himself and ther gal. I don't think he ever begrimed anything that himself or ther gal wanted. If he wanted a drink he walked inter ther bar-room, slapped down his money, got what he wanted and walked out again. But that wasn't often, for he gen'ly bought his liquid fire wholesale."

"Was he a hard drinker?"

"His dainty limit was a quart."

"Heavens! No wonder he came to an untimely end."

"Whisky didn't do that fer him; his quart gen'ly lasted a week or two."

"Oh! that's better. What then did take him off?"

"I allus had an idea that there was a little foul play about his sudden death but maybe I'm wrong."

"Whom do you suspect?"

"Waal, I don't know, fur I can't say as I ever settled that p'int in my mind 'gainst anybody," Rosedale replied.

"You must have some idea."

"Waal, at any rate none that I care to express. There was only a few persons the old man ever spoke to. After the camp was struck here he didn't bother it much, except to come around occasionally and git his quart. Most of his time he spent ramblin' about in ther mountains. After that gal came, she kept close to ther house. She was seldom seen."

"Do you believe Whitney had as big a fortune as it is represented?"

"No doubt of it. He had been mining here for years, and plucking ther fat right out of the gulch. Ther fortune probably ceased to grow when the camp was established. Every one knew he had a fortune, and numerous attempts were made to find it, some even before he died. Some folks has an idea that where he died is close to where the fortune is buried."

"Has search been made there?"

"Yes, a dozen of 'em."

"And nothing found?"

"Nary. There's no use searchin', I tell 'em. Old Whit was cute enough to put it in some outlandish place where no one would think of lookin' for it."

"In case it is accidentally found, do you suppose the finders will be honest enough to turn it over to the girl?"

Old Rosy shrugged his shoulders.

"That would depend somewhat on who found it," he said. "There's a few honest people in this town, I allow, who would give the gal her own. Then there's another class that would keep ther lion's share, if not all."

"The latter are in the majority?"

"Oh, yes, largely."

"How about the Social Six?"

A shrug of the shoulders.

"Well," Dick persisted, "who are the ones who are principally eager to find this fortune?"

"Waal, let's see: There's Sherwood, of Carson; he's offered five hundred dollars for a clew leadin' to its discovery; and several of our citizens has offered similar amounts. Jim Rosedale, here, your humble servant, has made himself heard, too, in the interest of ther gal. I reckon one of ther strongest 'thusiasts on ther subject is Hen Hoon."

"He means business, eh?"

"Yes, he's after ther fortune hot. He's at ther head of a gang of ruffians of his own stamp, and they swear they'll kill all other searchers."

"They had better look out and go a little slow, or they may get popped over themselves. I've a notion that I'll take a hand in this little game."

"I wouldn't advise you to."

"Why not?"

"Because it will only get you into trouble. I'll tell you quietly that some folks here is a

little suspicous of you already, and when it leaks out that you are after ther fortune, there may be an uprising against you."

"Let 'em rise!"

"But, you can't fight the whole town, can you?"

"You don't know what I can do."

"Maybe not; but you let that fortune alone."

"Not much!"

"You'll be sorry."

"I'm seldom sorry for what I do."

"Oh, well, go ahead; it's not my pie."

"Tell you what I'll do," said Dick, lighting a cigar.

"What's that?"

"I'll bet ten dollars against a hundred of these cigars that I am the first man to find the Whitney fortune."

Old Rosy jumped at the chance.

"It's a 'eedin,'" he cried.

The bet was cemented with a hand-shake, which ended the conversation, Rosedale being called away.

During this talk a vision of Ollie Whitney had been before Dick's mind's eye all the time.

He took a nap in the afternoon, but he dreamed of her—saw her—heard her sweet voice. When he awoke it was nearly tea-time, and he was now hungry enough.

"I'll be blowed if I will eat at the general table with those aristocrats who are treating the girl so shabbily," he vowed. "I reckon if I were to gather in my deposits from different banks I could buy the crowd. To spite them, just for Ollie's sake, I'll have a private table."

When he went down-stairs he at once sought Rosedale.

The old man was behind the bar, dealing out liquid refreshments at a lively : ate.

As soon as he was at liberty, Dick made known his desire.

"Want a private table, eh?" the landlord considered. "Certainly. Can have all the tables you want. Just go tackle the old woman. She will fix you out."

Nothing daunted, Dick proceeded to "tackle the old woman," as directed. He sought out Aunty Rosedale and made known his whim to her, and it was soon arranged.

It was somewhat of a surprise to the other guests, therefore, when they came trooping in to supper, to see the handsome stranger seated at a private table by himself, with the best the house afforded spread out before him.

It was not generally known to the ladies that Dick was one of the prize-fighting party, as there were four of them without him, and they had occupied the foot of the main table since their arrival.

What their feelings and comments would be, when they came to know that they had been making much of a "common prize-fighter," Dick could only imagine. He had given them a clean cut, and he was pleased to note that they saw it, and that it was giving them much food for comment among themselves.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE BULLY ON THE RAMPAGE.

THAT dismal day was destined not to close without a breeze of excitement.

It came about in this way: Hen Hoon was on a jamboree, and in the course of his rounds paid a visit to the hotel, where he proceeded to put down several "straights."

That done, he took the center of the floor and proceeded to state that he was a "jim-dandy," and that he could "lick" any "galoot" that wore shoe-leather.

As no one present questioned his statement, Hen took another drink for luck.

Just then Deadwood Dick, coming from supper, took a seat in the front of the room, lighted a cigar and proceeded to make himself comfortable.

But he was not left long unmolested, for the bully soon espied him and came swaggering up.

"Hello, hyar, me gallus binki-dori with all yer good clothes on!" he cried; "who air you, and what be you doin' in this town?"

"That is my business," replied Dick.

"Oh! it is, hey?"

"You bet!"

"Waal, I dunno about that. Mebby I hev got a word to say about it."

"Not if I know myself you haven't," retorted Dick. "I am president, vice-president and general manager of my own business, and I don't employ any extra help."

"Maybe you don't know who I am."

"No, and I don't care a flip, either."

"Waal, I'll proceed to inform you that I am the great and only Henry Hoon, the terror of all

Nevada, and the champion knocker-out of the age. I kin lick any galoot in this camp, yourself included."

"Well, go ahead and lick 'em, and don't come bothering me. I don't care who you can whip, or who you can't. You are nothing to me."

"I ain't, hey? Waal, now, maybe you will think different when I give you a slap alongside yer jaw."

"You had better go along about your business," Dick advised, sharply.

"Not much. My business is right here fer the present. Why, I chaw up a couple like you for breakfast every morning. Come here to fight a prize-fight, did ye? You is a purty lookin' prize fighter, you be! You couldn't lick a crippled bullfrog."

"It don't matter what I can do or what I can't do," Dick snapped. "You go away and mind your business. I don't want anything to do with you."

"No, I reckon not. I'm goin' away, but I'm comin' back agaia to put you through a course of sprouts, so you kin be gettin' ready."

With that Mr. Henry Hoon ambled away.

Colonel Blood came along just as Hoon departed.

"Does he want to fight you?" the colonel asked.

"Yes, seems to," Dick replied.

"Well, if he comes bothering you any more just lay him out."

"Maybe I can't do it."

"Easily. He's nothing but a rough-and-tumble fighter. No science at all."

"But he's a much bigger man than I am, you know."

"That don't make any difference. If you can do Jack Duffy up you can surely do as much for Hen Hoon. He wants a good thrashing worse than any galoot I know of, and you are just the lad to give it to him."

"I haven't done Duffy up yet, though," Dick reminded. "I sha'n't take much more of this fellow's lip, however, that's a sure thing."

"Don't you. I have quite a liking for you, and I don't want to see a big loafer like Hen Hoon walk over you, or insult you."

With that the colonel moved on.

Pete More, Dick's second, had been taking all this in and, now stepped up to Dick and said:

"Dick, you mustn't bother with that fellow. We all know you can lay him out, and it ain't necessary. Let's go to our room. You'll only spend your strength for nothin', and maybe hurt your fist, and that will put you in bad trim to meet Jack."

"I'm not bothering with him," Dick answered. "If you don't want him hurt, keep him away from me. If I left the room he'd crow here all night. Don't you worry about my hurting myself over him."

Pete had no time to say more, for just then Hoon again swaggered up.

"Whoop-ee!" he roared, swinging his hat in his hand. "Heer I come, sloppin' over fer a fight! Hillo, thar, ye starched-up dude, aire ye ready?"

"I'll give ye jest two seconds to git up off that chair and square yerself."

Dick did not move. He sat there, apparently unconcerned. Even Hoon was puzzled. Such indifference was beyond his understanding; but he waited no longer, and lurching forward he struck Dick on the side of the face with the flat of his hand.

The blow of course had the effect to bring Dick to his feet instantly, and with one terrific blow, on Hoon's neck, the bully went crashing to the floor.

He was not knocked insensible, however, and soon regained his feet. But he might better have remained down, for another blow sent him back to the boards.

This time he did not rise. It was a clear case of knock-out in two blows.

When he finally did recover sufficiently to regain his equilibrium, he hobbled out of the hotel and vanished. He had nothing to say. All the braggadocio had been knocked completely out of him.

"You've fixed him, Bristol," declared Colonel Blood, coming up. "He won't come around blowing any more while you are around."

As soon as the excitement had passed, Dick and Pete More noticed that Jack Duffy, Johnny Webb, and Harry McDaniels, the referee, were holding a consultation in one corner of the room.

"What is going on over there?" he questioned.

"I give it up," answered Pete, "but I can guess!"

"What is your guess?"

"I'll bet they want to have the fight come off now. Jack and Johnny no doubt think they'll

have you at a disadvantage, after your bout with the bully."

"Maybe you are right. Well, I'm ready for them."

Just then Johnny Webb crossed over and called Pete to one side.

"Well, what is it?" Dick inquired, as soon as Pete came back.

"It is just what I guessed," Pete answered. "They are going to brace the landlord to allow the fight to come off right here."

"Whew! that's nervy! He'll never allow it. I'm ready, however, if he does consent."

In a few minutes Old Rosy was "braced."

"What?" he cried, "allow ther fight to come off right here in my house! I couldn't think of it. It would ruin me. Sorry, gentlemen, but I must refuse. Tell ye what I will do, though, and I was goin' to mention it to ye in ther mornin' if ther weather didn't prove no better."

"What's that?" was the eager demand.

"Yer kin hev ther use of my big new barn."

This was something that no one had thought of. It was just the place. It was fully equal, in the matter of floor-space, to the church.

Old Rosedale, for want of some better use for his surplus cash, perhaps, had recently built a mammoth barn, though for the life of him he had no clear idea what he was going to use it for. Live-stock, at Rosedale Flats, was a scarce article. Old Rosy had only two horses—or three, including Ollie Whitney's, and a cow; but the new barn was big enough for forty head.

"That is just the place!" cried Colonel Blood. "Why didn't somebody think of it before?"

"Will you fight there, to-night, sir?" asked Johnny Webb, of Dick.

"Yes, I'm ready," Dick answered.

That settled it, and the seconds and the referee, together with a score of eager citizens, went out to the barn to look at it and make ready for the battle.

## CHAPTER VII. THE PRIZE-FIGHT.

THE rain had let up a little, but the storm had not broke. The thick, black clouds were scudding across the sky, and it was plain that it was but a lull in the tempest.

When the seconds, referee and others started for the barn, two or three men set out for the flats to notify folks there that the fight was about to come off.

It took but a hint to draw a crowd up to the bluff. The stage had not arrived yet, but that did not stop any one from coming. The fight was considered of more importance than the arrival of the "hearse."

In twenty minutes Old Rosy's bar-room was crowded, and he did a rushing business for a time.

He found that letting his barn for the fight had been a good investment.

In about half an hour everything was ready for the mill to come off. A goodly number of lanterns had been hung up in the barn, the floor had been cleared, and a ring—if by any stretch of the imagination it could be called such—had been formed by running a rope around in a zig-zag way from post to post.

All being ready, the announcement was made in the bar-room to that effect and the crowd repaired to the bar.

Old Rosy was with the rest. Knowing that business was not likely to be at all lively at the bar during the fight, he had called his better-half to preside over it in his absence.

Dick and his opponent went out, accompanied by their seconds, and took their places in their respective corners.

The principals soon threw off all superfluous clothes, and were ready for the fray.

Time was soon called, and they toed the mark.

The barn was packed full, from the confines of the ring to the furthest extremities, and the crowd was in a state of breathless excitement.

It was the first time that Rosedale Flats had ever known anything of this sort, and the citizens were prepared to enjoy it to the utmost.

"This jest scoops ther jam," declared Old Rosy. "It makes me feel like I did when I tended a circus once when I was a boy."

There was a broad grin of pleasure upon his grim old visage.

For a few seconds the two men faced each other; then Duffy made a feint.

Dick did not move, but waited, and soon the real attack was begun, Duffy making a right-hand lead for his opponent's head.

Out flew Dick's left, like a flash, but not with great force, and Duffy's face met it, while his own blow merely grazed Dick's chin.

This was a surprise to both Duffy and his backer. The left-hander is always an ugly thing to counter, and it was now evident that with the left hand Dick was especially skilled and strong.

"He's caught a Tartar," observed Colonel Blood to Old Rosy, meaning that Duffy had.

"Et looks like it," the landlord agreed.

The plan that Deadwood Dick meant to work on was this: He was going to get in every hit he could, little and big, and avoid getting hit in return if possible. He had no desire to come out with any marks on his face that would not wash off.

Both men sprung back to position quickly. Duffy angry and Dick calm.

The second advance quickly followed.

It was a clever left, following a right-hand feint, but it found Dick promptly on hand to receive it.

He paid little attention to the feint, but now sent in his right almost as promptly as the feint was made, and Duffy ran his chin against it with force. But Duffy this time followed up the feint with a blow of the right, in spite of the counter on the chin, and only for the quickest action on the part of Dick he would have got a stinger.

The blow was a slightly swinging one, however, and, almost instinctively expecting it, Dick's left arm went up, the elbow out, and that point caught Duffy's arm on the inside with painful effect.

Duffy was soon out of range, now very red in the face and becoming too angry to keep his wits about him properly. He saw that he had run up against the worst kind of a snag in Deadwood Dick, but he soon tried his luck again. And this time, too, he almost got in good work. It was half luck on Dick's part that he escaped the well-aimed blow—an "inside right,"—one with which Dick had never had much acquaintance. Duffy gave him such an opening that he could not resist the temptation to send in his left, but instead of Duffy's stopping it, or trying to, he let it go by, at the same time drawing back his right until the fist was at his shoulder. Then, just as Dick's blow was spent, and he was well forward, out flew Duffy's right fist like a shot from a mortar.

Dick ducked with the quickness of lightning, a thing he seldom did, for it is dangerous business, but he did it almost without thought, and it saved him. He was up again, however, before Duffy could think of trying a left-hand upper-cut.

He now saw that Duffy was a skilled opponent, and he settled down to serious work. He saw, too, that he must share the aggressive, for now Duffy was beginning to wait for him a little.

Dick suddenly let out his left again. Duffy promptly cross-countered with his right. Dick's move, however, was only a feint. He did not allow his arm to go the full length, though it did come close to his opponent's face, but drew it back in time to stop the "cross." At the same instant he let go his right with a good swing at Duffy's jaw.

The blow was a terrible one, and it sent Duffy staggering back until only for the rope and the crowd behind it he would have landed upon his back.

The crowd gave a cheer, and the excitement was at fever heat.

"This here is ther most fun I ever had!" cried Old Rosy. "Young man," addressing Dick, "I'd be proud ter be yer daddy."

"A few more like that," declared the colonel, "will settle the matter."

Duffy was not hurried, but allowed to get his wind.

Presently time was called, and they stood up to the "scratch" again.

This time Duffy tried something else. By a highly clever ruse he got his left around Dick's neck, and no doubt would have punished him badly about the face had it not been for the fact that about the time he was ready to do the punching, he discovered that his right hand was a prisoner in Dick's grasp.

"I object to that part of it," Dick remarked.

Making a sudden half-turn, Dick brought his left arm where he could use it, and the result was that Duffy got one taste of the medicine he had intended administering to Dick.

Releasing Dick suddenly, Duffy got in one fairly good one on his neck, and was out of reach immediately.

"I'll give you more of the same kind, too," he declared.

"I don't expect anything else," Dick returned.

It was the end of the second round.

When time was called again, Duffy led with a prompt and quick left-hander right at Dick's stomach. Dick did not try the old straight-counter with his left, but let go with his right at full force. It looked risky, but it was the clear audacity of the move that made it a success. The blow landed with awful force on Duffy's neck, as he was coming toward it, while the one at Dick's stomach was barely felt, owing to his bending in on striking and the checking that Duffy got.

Duffy staggered back again until the friendly rope caught him as before. He looked a little sick of his contract.

Dick was as chipper as ever, except that his neck felt sore where Duffy had hit it.

Duffy's very first move had been a mistake. He ought to have known better than to have struck out with his right as he did, for it is about the last thing any good fighter will do, unless it is in active work when the coast is clear, for if the opponent knows anything at all about boxing, his left is pretty certain to find the nose of his antagonist.

It had been this reminder that had first "rattled" Duffy.

But now he had other reasons to bewail his hard luck, for that reminder had been backed up by others even more severe.

Duffy had science, plenty of it, but being now "rattled," he threw it to the winds and sailed in almost regardless of consequences; and, as a natural result, he got whipped.

Round after round was fought, for Duffy was game, but Bristol seemed not to mind the exercise now, and he laid any number of light blows just where he pleased, Duffy's momentum in striking giving all the force that was needed to make them terribly effective.

Finally the waits became longer between rounds, for it was plain to be seen by all that Duffy was being favored in every way, and Dick finally decided to end the battle.

With one good blow, the hardest he had dealt, he knocked Duffy to the floor, where he lay senseless and bleeding.

Johnny Webb "threw up the sponge," then, and the fight was over. The crowd yelled and hooted with delight, for they had enjoyed the "fun" greatly, and soon a break was made for the hotel.

A little later, when Harry McDaniels sought out Dick to hand over the stakes, Dick said:

"Give the money all to Jack. He was game, and has earned it. He forced the matter upon me so that I had to fight him, though I never wanted to. Give it to him, for he needs it more than I do."

And Pete More made it his business to see that Dick's request was carried out to the letter.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### DICK FREES HIS MIND.

ABOUT the time the fight was over, the stage arrived.

Finding the flats about deserted, and being afraid to stay there over night, anyhow, on account of the rising creek, the driver ascended the bluff to Old Rosy's establishment.

In building his big barn, Rosy had builded wiser than he knew. That barn would sooner or later draw the stage to his house, without any help from the rising creek.

"Whoah!" the driver sung out, as he stopped in front of the hotel and threw down the ribbons. "Hello! in there, citizens!"

"The stage! the stage!" was the cry, and the crowd poured out.

"Et looks like ye've all moved up from the flats," the driver saluted, "and I thought I'd come up, too. Hillo, thar, Old Rosy; any room in yer new barn fur these critters?"

"Lots of it, lots of it," the landlord assured.

"Glad ter hear it, fur I don't want ter put up down thar on the flats. Et looks like ther crick is goin' ter git her back up in earnest. Had a mighty tough time of it this trip. Did ye think I wasn't never comin'? Hillo, thar, passenger, stir out of that, fur this is Rosedale Flats."

The door of the stage had already opened, and a young man was getting out.

He was a fine-looking fellow, about twenty-four years of age, and well clad. He carried a grip, had a rubber coat thrown carelessly over his shoulders, and evidently was a city man.

Dick set him down at once for a New Yorker. He had that brisk air which Gothamites in general possess.

The young man entered the bar-room, stepped up to the desk, and asked if he could be given a room.

The landlord "allowed" that he could, and shoved out the register.

"Wynd Omar" was the rather odd name the stranger signed, and he set down his residence as New York.

Inquiring about supper he was taken to the dining-room, where he was speedily served.

He had been the only passenger, and as soon as the driver had put out the mail-bag and some light freight the coach was driven around to the new barn.

Bristol, after brushing up after the fight, was seated in the bar-room, drawing solace from his cigar, when a note was brought and handed to him.

It was superinscribed in feminine chirography, and he wondered from whom it could be.

Opening it, he read:

"MR. BRISTOL:—

"Will you oblige me by coming into the parlor for a few minutes? I would like to speak to you.

"BERTHA SHERWOOD."

Dick was a greatly surprised man.

Among the guests of the hotel to whom he had been introduced was this Bertha Sherwood. She was a tall, beautiful blonde, and perhaps the handsomest woman in the house. Her age was twenty-five. Her father was a Carson City stock-broker, and said to be very rich.

Bertha was spending the summer at Rosedale Flats, along with her mother.

At her first meeting with Dick she had resolved upon one thing. That one thing was that she would make a conquest of him. None of the other girls, she secretly resolved, should stand a ghost of a chance, for she would monopolize his spare time completely.

Of course Dick could not know this. He did not see anything in her to admire particularly. She certainly was not to be compared to Ollie Whitney.

"Well, this knocks me silly," Dick muttered. "I wonder what she can want of me? Perhaps I'm going to be lectured for fighting. The way to find out, I suppose, is to go and see."

Thrusting the note into his pocket, he started for the parlor.

Just as he was crossing the hall, and turning toward the parlor, he caught sight of Ollie Whitney. She did not see him. She was further down the hall, and was just in the act of peering into the dining-room.

Dick moved toward her, and owing to the constant noise of the many feet in the bar-room, she did not hear him.

As he came near to her he heard her exclaim, in a low tone:

"Good heavens! it is he! He must not see me!"

With that she turned from the door and flitted down the hall to the door of the kitchen, where she disappeared.

She had not turned toward where Dick was, and had not seen him.

Dick looked into the dining-room to learn whom she had meant by "he," and saw the young stranger, Wynd Omar, seated at the table.

"What means this?" Dick questioned. "Miss Ollie must know this fellow, and I must take a look at the register, to learn who he is. Is she afraid of him? He had better not molest her, or he may hear from me. But, I am keeping Miss Sherwood waiting, and that will never do."

He retraced his steps up the hall and entered the parlor.

Three ladies were there, one of whom was Bertha, who was seated in the far end of the room on a sofa. The other two were older women, to whom Dick had not been introduced.

Bertha motioned him to approach and take a seat near her. This he did, and she opened the conversation.

"Mr. Bristol," she said, "I suppose you are surprised that I have sent for you."

"Well, yes, somewhat, Miss Sherwood," Dick admitted.

"I feared that you would consider it bold on my part, but I acted under the advice of the leading lady of our set. She considered that we ought to tell you about something that you clearly do not know; warn you, if the term be admissible."

"Warn me?"

"Yes, if the word may be so applied. I suppose you know that our set here during the summer is quite select. It is quite exclusive, I assure you. Well, our set have taken a great fancy to you, for it is readily seen that you are

our social equal, and but for one thing we would make you the lion of the season."

"Indeed!" Dick exclaimed, all but paralyzed with surprise; "and what is that one thing?"

"You must cut that girl Whitney, whom we do not recognize as our equal at all. She is beneath us."

Dick felt like giving utterance to a whistle of astonishment.

"For unmitigated gall," he exclaimed in thought, "this surpasses anything that I have run across in a long time."

"We know that you are laboring under a misapprehension of her position here," the bold beauty rattled on, "and we feel it our duty to set you right. She can play and sing a little, and no doubt you have mistaken her for one of us, but she is not. She is poor, unrefined—there is so little refinement about poor people, you know; and really, she is employed here, and has actually been known to help wash the dishes in the kitchen! We decided that you should not be imposed upon. So, and it is painful to me to say it, if you expect us to recognize you, as we much desire to do, you must break off your acquaintance with her. We must be firm in this matter, as we can never treat her as an equal. We cannot go down into the mud, you know. In the morning, too, we are going to speak to Mr. Rosedale about these low prize-fighters who are here, and who have been fighting in the barn. Think of it!—being in the same house with such! Either they must go, or we will leave ourselves. We will not stay another twenty-four hours under the same roof with such low brutes."

She paused for breath.

"Is that all?" Dick politely asked. "Did your set commission you to wait upon me in this matter?"

"Yes, Mr. Bristol, you see—"

"Pardon me, Miss Sherwood, but, who is the leading lady—the supreme head—of this precious set of yours?"

Miss Sherwood paled slightly.

"It is Mrs. Maltravers," she made answer.

"Humph! and how many are there of this select and exclusive circle?"

"We number about a score, and all are wealthy and of the best families."

"Well, Miss Sherwood, kindly carry my compliments to your set, and request them not to trouble their heads further about me. I severed connection with them to-night when I left the common table. I choose my company to my own liking, and am thoroughly democratic in my ideas. I consider one person as good as another, so long as the person is respectable and honest. Wealth has nothing to do with it in my estimation."

"Pshaw! you cannot mean it."

"Certainly I do."

"But there is so little refinement about poor persons, and—"

"So you observed before, and I have found that there is a good deal too much of refinement, so-called, about some rich persons I have met."

"You are provoking!"

"I am candid. For instance, Miss Whitney is far more refined than some of the members of this chosen dozen of yours. You say that she works. What of that? Is work any disgrace? I fail to see it in that light. Work must be done by somebody, and it is no shame to the person who does it. In the case of Miss Whitney, I admire her all the more for it. I have been laboring under no misapprehension whatever about her position here. Nor did I mistake her for one of your little few—Oh! no. I was not being imposed upon in any way whatever, I assure you. I never allow myself to be imposed upon."

"So, as I said before, carry my compliments to your set. Tell them that I am sole manager of my own business, and do not require any of their advice or assistance. Tell them that I had not the slightest idea of entering society this season, and much less of posing as a lion. Tell them—"

"You are positively insulting, sir!" the young woman cried, pale to the lips.

"Not at all," Dick declared. "I am simply talking a little plainly, as this matter seems to require."

"You will be sorry for this."

"I guess not. But hear me out. Tell your precious set that I propose to seek my own associates, and that Miss Whitney is one of them, so long as she does not object. It is true that she does not dress in silk or satin, or sport a hundred-dollar fan, but she is a lady, and I won't hear her name aspersed. Thank them for their interest in my behalf, and finally, tell them that

I am only a low brute of a prize-fighter, anyhow. I am one of the men who fought in the barn a little while ago."

With a polite bow, then, Dick turned and left the room, leaving her sitting there, white with rage and mortification.

#### CHAPTER IX.

##### DICK HAS A CALLER.

THE man of many adventures overslept himself next morning, and it was past the middle of the forenoon when he awoke.

"Well, I am a fine fellow, to sleep as late as this!" he muttered. "It must have been the exercise last night that did the business for me."

Breakfast was long since over when he went down-stairs, and the fighters had gone away in the early stage. Pete More had told the landlord not to awaken Dick, but to let him sleep as late as he would.

It was still raining, and there was no sign of its ceasing.

Knowing that there was a restaurant down on the flats, and not wanting to put Aunty Rosedale to any trouble, Dick decided to go down there for his breakfast.

So he borrowed an umbrella from Old Rosy.

"Be keerful of it, me boy," cautioned the old man. "It's an old-timer, and has seen a powerful lot of service. Besides that, I don't know but it's the only one in ther town."

"Oh! I'll take good care of it," Dick promised.

He left the hotel and descended into the gulch.

Here all was wet and mud. Pools of water stood around over the flats and in the street. The creek, which was ordinarily but a little brook, was now a raging torrent. Its angry waters were almost up to the stringers of the rustic bridge, and if the creek continued to rise there was danger that the bridge would be swept away.

He found the restaurant open for business, however, and entering, seated himself at one of the tables and ordered a breakfast.

While he waited he picked up a newspaper that lay near at hand, and ran his eyes over its columns.

It proved to be the *Rosedale Bi-Weekly Register*, about as drowsy a local sheet as can be imagined. It had "patent outsides," and was given up chiefly to patent medicine advertisements inside.

It was dated the day previous, and its local column had something that caught Dick's eye.

The article read as follows:

##### "WHO ARE THEY?

The arrival of the alleged prize-fighters has been the cause of much speculation among our citizens as to what they are here for, since they seem to be making no moves toward a fight. Some one has suggested that perhaps they are here in search of the Whitney fortune. Should this prove to be the case, it is the plain duty of our citizens to rise in arms and drive the fellows from the camp. That fortune belongs here, and if these fellows find it, it is not likely that its rightful owner will ever see a penny of it. Furthermore, the *Register*, with its usual enterprise, has discovered that the ring-leader of this gang, Deadwood Dick, was once a road-agent, and still bears an unenviable reputation."

"That's a good one, anyhow," thought Dick. "I guess I can stand it, if the rest of the family can, however."

Another item right under this provoked a smile. It ran thus:

"Rev. Calvin Corker will preach his farewell sermon on Sunday; the subject—'Man's Inhumanity to Man.' Cal says that Rosedale is no good. He has been with us three Sundays, and says he has expended fifty dollars' worth of breath, while the contribution-box rattled thirteen cents and a quid of tobacco. As soon as Cal moseys, Sal Slade from Carson will move in and start a dance-hall. Sal is a rusler, and tickets for the opening are selling like hot cakes."

Other items followed in order, and the column ended with an apology from the editor.

It was to this effect:

"This number of the *Register* should have been published yesterday, but the roof leaked too bad, and it took us all the forenoon to find the hole and plug it up. The next edition will come out on Saturday, if that plug don't start."

These items were about the sum total of the paper's news, and as Dick had no taste for advertisements he laid it down.

"So, I'm a suspect, am I?" he mused. "Well, let them think whatever they please. I have taken a notion to search for that Whitney fortune, and I'm going to do it. Too bad the paper didn't come out yesterday; it would have saved me that interview with Miss Sherwood, perhaps."

After finishing his breakfast Dick went back

to the hotel, where he delivered the borrowed umbrella in good condition to its owner.

"Waal, this kinder looks as if this spell of weather means ter stick to us," Old Rosy observed.

"It certainly does," Dick agreed.

"Hev you seen the piece in ther paper about you and the other fellers?" the landlord asked.

"Yes, I've seen it."

"What d'ye think of it?"

"I didn't pay much attention to it. The chances are, however, that I may have occasion to call on that editor and head for him."

"Perfectly proper," exclaimed Old Rosy, slapping his knee. "You stay here awhile longer, and I reckon as how some o' these fresh ducks that swim in their own gall will learn to let you alone."

"Well, perhaps."

"You'll excuse my askin', but is there any truth in this report against you?"

"That I was a road-agent?"

"Yes."

"That was Deadwood Dick, the original, but he wasn't half as black as he is painted."

"Oh! I see. Then you are—"

"I am Deadwood Dick, Junior."

The day was a dreary one. The rain came down in sheets, and there seemed to be no let up to it.

Dick tried to read, but that proved a failure. Everybody about the hotel had the mopes, or blues, and enough ill things could not be invented to say of the weather.

Much to his disappointment, Dick saw nothing of Ollie Whitney. What could the matter be? Was she ill? Had she left the hotel?

Dick finally put the question to Old Rosy.

"Oh! she's around the place somewhere," was the reply. "D'ye want her?"

"Oh, no, only I didn't see her around and thought she might be ill."

"You're a good one," laughed the old man, "but you can't fool me."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, you're stuck on ther gal. Can't blame ye, though, fur Ollie is a durn fine gal," and, with a chuckle, the old fellow went off about his business.

Dick had a suspicion which he believed was not far from the truth. He believed that Ollie was keeping out of sight of the stranger, Wynd Omar.

Why she should want to do this, he could not guess. From what he had seen in the ball on the previous night, however, he knew that she had recognized the man, and it had struck him at the time that she feared him.

Wynd Omar was around, and once Dick saw him in earnest conversation with Colonel Blood.

"I'll be blowed if I like the colonel any too well," Dick muttered to himself. "He is a fine-looker, and is well liked, it seems, but he's not to my taste."

Shortly after noon the rain slackened up a little, although it did not cease entirely.

Having heartily tired of the hotel, Dick concluded to visit his house on the bluff and see what it looked like by daylight.

With that thought, too, came the sudden recollection that he had not yet kept his word with Miss Whitney and released the bear, Old Bob. He decided to go at once, before it could slip his mind again.

Once more he borrowed the umbrella and set out.

He passed down the slope to the flats, and on to the bridge that spanned the creek. The water was now up to the stringers of the bridge, causing it to tremble, and it looked as though there was danger that it would be swept away.

"I don't know whether it will hold me up or not," Dick muttered, "but I'll venture."

It held him, and he succeeded in getting over all right. Then he made for the house on the bluff as fast as he could, for the rain now began to come down in torrents again.

When he reached the house he found that the big cinnamon which he had captured two nights before had got rid of his bonds and taken his leave.

"I'm glad of it," Dick said, "and I hope he'll kindly forget to come back again. He might take a notion to embrace me."

An examination of the rope, however, showed that the bear had not got away without help. His bonds had been cut with a keen knife.

"Bruin must have a friend hereabouts," Dick reflected. "Maybe it's Old Whit's ghost."

Inside, the house was as quiet as on his first visit. The parlor room had evidently never been used, except lately by Old Bob, the bear. Dust, mud, and broken bottles covered the floor, and cobwebs curtained the windows.

There were no closets—nothing but the bare room.

"No place to hide money here, I reckon," Dick decided.

He passed into the next room. This was almost a duplicate of the first, but it had one closet. There was nothing in that, however, but an old clay pipe that had probably given Old Whit many hours' solace.

To the third room, or kitchen, Dick gave more attention. There was evidence that fire had recently been in the stove, and a meal cooked there. Plenty of fuel was at hand, and the remains of the meal were scattered around.

"Rather substantial ghosts that haunt this house, I venture to say," Dick reflected.

He looked around the room carefully, but discovered nothing to interest him. He sounded the walls in places, but they seemed solid enough.

There was a lamp on a little shelf in the kitchen, nearly full of oil, and lighting this, Dick proceeded to make another examination of the cellar. He had no hope that he would find anything to reward him for a search, and he was not disappointed. The cellar had no secrets to disclose. It had been so thoroughly dug up by former searchers that Dick made no attempt to try his hand, so he returned to the floor above.

Putting out the light and returning the lamp to the shelf, he went up-stairs.

Here he looked around thoroughly, but without making any discoveries. Not a clew was to be found. One of the beds looked as though it had been slept in lately, and the clothes were anything but clean. The clothes of the other bed looked better in this respect.

"These will come in handy," Dick mused, "in case I have to stay here all night, as I certainly will have to do if that bridge gives way."

He returned to the kitchen, and feeling chilly, made up a fire and sat down by the stove to reflect.

He had been seated but a few minutes when he heard steps in the front room, and a man soon made his appearance in the door of the kitchen.

It was the stranger, Wynd Omar!

#### CHAPTER X.

##### A REMARKABLE STORY.

THE young stranger was clad in his rubber coat, and had the advantage of the weather.

"I hope I don't intrude," he observed, smiling.

"Not at all," Dick responded, heartily. "Come right in," he invited, and he made room before the fire, and swung a chair into place for his caller.

The young man accepted the invitation, first throwing off his rubber coat.

"I saw you cross the bridge and come up here," he said, "and having learned that you have rented this house, I have followed you to have a little talk with you."

"Yes, this is my castle," Dick owned, "and I am at your service."

"I have been talking with Colonel Blood about the Mr. Whitney who used to live here, but as I do not like the man any too well I did not take him into my confidence to any extent. I mean to deal differently with you."

"We seem to have both formed about the same opinion of the colonel, then," said Dick. "I don't fancy him any too well."

"I am glad to hear you say that. I am sure I shall make no mistake in taking you into my confidence."

"I do not invite you to do so, sir," Dick reminded.

"I know it," was the response, "but I fancy I know a gentleman when I meet one, and I am sure you will not abuse my confidence. Let us become acquainted. I am Wynd Omar, of New York."

"I am Dick Bristol, otherwise 'Deadwood Dick,' of the world at large."

"You claim a broad citizenship, sir."

"It is about as near as I can get at it, nevertheless. That isn't so, either, for I am an American to the backbone."

"Is it going too far to inquire what your business is, sir?"

"Not a bit," was Dick's answer; "you are welcome to the information. I am a sort of independent detective."

"Ha! a detective, eh? I am glad to hear you say that. No doubt you can give me some solid advice."

"You are welcome to the best I can offer."

"Good enough. And now for my story. I

am the son and only child of my father, by his first marriage. I am twenty-four years of age. Our family is one of the oldest in New York. We have been wealthy, but of late years our fortune has gradually decreased, owing to business failures and bad investments. But, enough of that. When I was ten my father married his second wife, and by her has had several children. Of them nothing needs be said. My step-mother's maiden name, if that has anything to do with the matter, was Honora Wilford. Of her family I know little or nothing, and have no interest in that direction, anyhow.

"She, my step-mother, was about twenty years old at the time of her marriage. She was pretty, decidedly pretty, and every inch a lady. I liked her at first sight, and I love and respect her now. Brother and sister could not have got along half so well together as my step-mother and I have, and in my opinion a step-mother is not a bad thing to have, Bristol."

"But I am not coming to the point very fast, I see. I must tell you what has brought me here. Two years ago I was located for a time at Newburg, New York. While there I made the acquaintance of a pretty young lady who was attending a school in that town. Her name was Fay Fenton. She was young, not over sixteen I should say, and I loved her. I love her now, and could not tear her memory from my heart if I would. I went away from the place for a few months, and when I returned she had gone from the school, and that was the last I ever expected to see of her. I tried to get some information at the school, but as I could not show that I was a relative of the girl's, or any clear reason why I should know of her whereabouts, I could learn nothing. I never expected to see her again, and perhaps never shall."

"But, here comes in the wonderful part of my story. Some months ago my step-mother began to have a wonderful dream. I say began to have it, because the same dream was repeated night after night for weeks."

"She dreamed that she and I together were traveling in the West. We stopped at a place called Rosedale Flats. Here, according to the dream, I met a beautiful girl with whom I fell immediately in love. In the same hour, as it seemed in the dream, I married this girl, and she turned out to be immensely rich, although I had considered her to be very poor."

"The first time my step-mother had this dream, she told me about it next morning as something of a joke. On the next morning, however, she told me, with much surprise, that she had had the same dream again. On the third morning it was repeated with profound amazement. But, it did not end there. It was repeated night after night, until it had made an impression upon me that I could not shake off."

"Now I had never had any faith in dreams, but this struck me as being something entirely out of the ordinary. I had much less faith in seers, oracles, fortune-tellers, or whatever you please to call them; but my step-mother was urging me to go and see a certain Madame Tiresias. This woman has considerable fame among those who believe in such nonsense—as I then looked upon it, and claimed to possess the gift of Zeus. Whether this gift will make her wise enough not to drink from the well of Tiphossa, remains to be seen."

"Finally I went to see her, and I tell you candidly, Bristol, it was one of the strangest experiences of my life. I was about to speak to her, when I entered her presence, but she motioned me to silence and would not hear a word from me."

"'Unbeliever,' she spoke, 'I know thee and what brings thee here. It is no false dream, but a true vision. Go to that place of the West, inquire there for a Jason Whitney, and he will bestow upon thee a bride and a fortune. Ay, more still I do for thee. That thou mayest know thy bride at sight, step forward and look into this crystal basin.'

"There was a glass bowl standing upon a table near where she sat, and she motioned me to step forward and look into it. I did, and you may judge of my feelings, when, on looking into the water contained in the bowl, I beheld there the fair face of *Fay Fenton!*"

Deadwood Dick was deeply interested in the story, and as the young man stopped, he exclaimed:

"Wonderful!"

"The vision gradually faded," the young man went on, "and as it disappeared, and I was about to speak, the woman again motioned me to silence, saying:

"'Speak not, unbeliever, but obey me. Thou hast seen her face; go, seek her, and make her thy bride.'

"With that she dismissed me, and a servant led me out. To him I paid her fee, and left the house."

"Now, what do you make of it? I had never seen this woman before. She did not allow me to speak one word. But, see what she told me, and see the vision! How do you account for it?"

"I don't account for it all," Dick answered. "It is remarkable, to say the least about it."

"I should say so! Well, I needed no urging to set out to find this place after that, for the vision I had seen of the girl I love settled my mind upon that point. Of course I made no mention of this part of it to any one. Still, I had little confidence in the quest until I arrived here and learned that such a person as Jason Whitney had actually lived here. Of course his history, and the story of his buried fortune, are familiar to you, so I need not go any further."

"This is a remarkable matter," declared Dick, reflectively. "How much of it have you disclosed to Colonel Blood?"

"Nothing of it. I have merely questioned him about Whitney."

"And you have learned that he had a daughter?"

"Yes; and I have asked to see her, but so far have been put off. Perhaps I shall get an interview with her this afternoon or evening."

"Perhaps—but I doubt it."

"You doubt it!" the young man cried; "why do you doubt it?"

Dick had let the words fall thoughtlessly.

"Oh, she is a shy thing," he turned it off, "and you will have to bide your time."

He had been thinking of the words he had heard from her lips. What had been their meaning? Was she the Fay Fenton this young man had known? He had little doubt of it, for she had told him that she had been at school at Newburg.

"I thought you must have some deeper reason for doubting," Omar observed, "by the way you spoke. Now, though we are strangers, what would you advise me to do in this matter?"

"I'll give it to you, straight," Dick declared, heartily. "Go on and get an interview with Miss Whitney, by all means. I am interested in the affair more than ever, now. I had already resolved to try my hand at finding the lost fortune."

"And will you lend me your help in the matter?"

"I will."

"Thank you, sir. I like you, and I know that we can be friends. Here is my hand."

"And here is mine," cried Dick.

They shook hands, and so the compact was sealed.

"Now," spoke Dick, "before we go any further let me give you a little word of warning. You had better not let your good-fellowship for me be known. I am under the ban, to a degree, in this town, and am likely to get into trouble. I don't want you to get into the same fix."

"What kind of trouble?" Omar asked.

"Well, it appears that there is a clique here who have made it their business to find this lost fortune, as near as I can get at it, and who mean to bar the way against all outsiders. I have made it no secret that I intend to search for it, and I may be called to account by them. They are called the Social Six, I believe. I think I have marked at least three of them."

"Thank you for the warning, Bristol, but you will find that I am willing to take my share of the danger."

"That is all right, but there is no need of it at present."

"Then shall I not recognize you at the hotel?"

"Oh! you can do that, but we will not hold any long talks in the presence of others."

"Very well. My errand over here was to find you alone, and to request the privilege of looking about a little for a clew to this old man's gol'. It seems his daughter is poor, but that this lost fortune would make her rich."

"Right you are. That is, if all accounts of it are to be believed. Do you think, though, that she will turn out to be the girl you are seeking—your Fay Fenton? This young lady's name is Ollie Whitney."

"This is one point over which I was puzzled. Nothing but a sight of her will answer the question. I must see her, and will. I must go back to the hotel. Were you going over soon?"

"No," Dick answered, "I am not going right away. I meant to spend an hour or two here, at least."

"Then I will be off. I must see that lady."

They shook hands again, and after some further remarks, parted, Wynd Omar leaving the house and starting down the bluff to the flats.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE SOCIAL SIX STRIKES.

DICK replenished the fire and fell into a brown study.

The story to which he had just listened was such a remarkable one that, now being again alone, he was almost ready to believe that he had been dreaming; but the chair that his visitor had occupied, and the marks of his muddy boots on the floor, were proof enough that it had been no dream.

So taken up with his thoughts did Dick become that the time slipped away unheeded, and ere he was aware of it his fire was out and it was growing dark.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, springing up, "this won't do; I must get back to the hotel."

On going to the door, however, he changed his mind. The rain was now falling in almost blinding sheets.

"I'll be blowed if I'll wade over there in such a rain," he muttered. "I'll go without my supper first. Here's fire, and shelter, too, and I'll stay here."

He went back to the kitchen, lighted the lamp, and made up a new fire.

That done, he went up-stairs and brought down some of the bed-clothes and proceeded to make up a bunk on some chairs.

When he had done, finally, he sat down by the fire again.

While sitting there, his attention was drawn to a peculiar little spot on the woodwork at the side of the cupboard.

"Shoot me if that don't look like a tiny key-hole," he muttered, "and I'm going to investigate. Maybe the secret is right there!"

Getting up and taking up the lamp, he looked closely, and a keyhole it was, true enough. He discovered more. The keyhole was in a small, upright drawer that was built into the side of the cupboard.

These discoveries so thrilled Dick for a moment that he did nothing but stand and look at them. But he soon roused to action.

"Eureka!" he exclaimed. "This may contain the treasure!"

Putting down the lamp on the table, he tried to open the drawer, but, as he might have known, it was locked.

This fact did not balk him long. Finding an ax on the wall, he attacked the face of the drawer vigorously, and in a little time the front of it came off and its contents were exposed.

The opening thus made was about three inches wide, about a foot and a half high, and seemed to extend back the depth of the cupboard.

The first thing seen was a small Bible, with a long envelope in it that protruded several inches at one end. When this was taken out some small, nickel-plated tools were seen, tools such as a draughtsman might use.

Dick soon transferred the contents of the drawer to the table, and sat down to investigate his find.

"Among other things was a half-sheet of paper, to one corner of which was securely pasted a small compass. On the paper was a rude map, or sketch and map combined, and at the bottom was what was evidently the key to the chart, as follows:

"\*2 Deg. N. of N. W.\*"

Laying that aside for the present, Dick took up the Bible to learn what was in the envelope it contained. On opening the book, he found that the envelope had served as a book-mark. The pages it parted were those given up for use as a family record. And such a record was here found. It was as follows:

"Jason Whitney, born Dec 13, 1834, and Deborah Wilford, born Mar. 21, 1836, were married June 19, 1860.

"Olivia Whitney, born May 23, 1871.

"Deborah Whitney, died Nov. 2, 1878."

"The records may be valuable," thought Dick, "and I'll just tear the leaves out and pocket them."

He suited action to the words, folding the extracted pages and putting them into an inner pocket.

Next he opened the envelope.

This contained a legal paper that proved to be Jason Whitney's will. It was drawn up in correct form, but it was short and right to the point. It was set forth in these words:

"I, Jason Whitney, in soundness of mind, do make and declare this to be my last will and testament. I bequeath all my property, real and personal, wheresoever the same may be, to my daughter, Olivia Whitney, unconditionally, to have and to hold unto my said daughter, and her heirs and

assigns forever. And I appoint the finder or finders of this my last will and testament, whoever he, she, or they may be, to be executor, executrix, or executors, of the same; trusting to the common honesty of man to man for a faithful discharge of the duty.

JASON WHITNEY.

"SELM DODD,  
"HIRAM GRISWOLD, } Witnesses."

On reading this, Deadwood Dick gave utterance to a whistle.

"This is more than I expected to find," he exclaimed. "So I am executor of this will, by right of discovery, am I? All right, Whit, I'll do the square thing by you, and Miss Ollie shall have everything. It seems this will is unconditional, too, though from what Ollie said, I thought it would be found otherwise. No matter; I'll see that she gets her rights."

Folding the paper as he had found it, he returned it to its envelope, and put it carefully away in his pocket along with the pages from the Bible.

This done, he turned his attention again to the crude chart that had the compass attached to it.

For some time he sat studying it in silence, while without the furious storm still raged, fairly shaking the house at times, and causing it to rattle and tremble continuously.

So deep in thought was he that he did not hear the front door open, nor light steps cross the floor toward the room where he was. But, then, these sounds were hardly to be heard above the other noise.

"It is the key at last!" Dick finally exclaimed, joyously. "The treasure is buried two degrees north of northwest from this house. But, the question is, how far away?"

"It can't be far away," said a voice, in a quiet tone.

Like a flash Dick wheeled around, and a revolver was ready in his hand. He had had no idea but that he was alone.

Instead, he found a masked man standing at his elbow, whom, in spite of the mask, he instantly recognized as Colonel Blood.

"So, you have found it, have you?" the man observed, significantly.

"Not yet, but I expect to," Dick replied.

"I don't reckon you will."

"Why not?"

"Because it is for me to find it, not you. Give me that paper."

Dick laughed, and quietly shoved the map and compass into his pocket.

"You won't get it," he declared. "Who are you, anyhow?"

"I am one of a band known as the Social Six. We do not mean to allow any interloper to come here and carry off this fortune. Hand that paper over."

The man was standing in the door, and no weapon was in his hands.

"I thought you were one of that band of outlaws, Colonel Blood," Dick said. "As to handing the paper over, you must take me for a tenderfoot. I don't see it. I can take care of it, I guess. If you get it you will have to take it."

"You know me!" the colonel exclaimed, snatching off his mask. "Well, no matter, since this game is to be ended here and now. Once more, will you hand over that paper?"

A slight sound at the window caused Dick to turn his eyes in that direction, and what was his surprise to see two revolvers leveled at his heart.

He was in a critical position, but—he was Deadwood Dick!

"I see you have got me covered," he observed, calmly.

"You bet!" cried the colonel. "Now perhaps you will listen to me. A single move on your part to lift your weapon will send you into the Great Unknown. Hand over that paper, or die!"

Dick's revolver barked an answer, and the room was plunged in almost total darkness. An instant later two bullets crushed though the window, but they buried themselves harmlessly in the wall. Dick was out of the way.

No sooner had he fired and put out the light than he sprung forward and sent Colonel Blood to the floor with a solid left-hander on the neck, and dashed out into the parlor-room of the house.

"I've plugged ther cuss, colonel," cried a voice from without, and in a moment a pair of heavy boots thundered over the floor of the room Dick was in and made for the kitchen.

"Look out! Don't shoot this way!" cried the frightened colonel, as he was heard scrambling to his feet.

"Where is he?" demanded the other, and Dick recognized the voice of Ben Hoon.

"He's gone. He knocked me flat and dusted out."

"Ther doost yer say?"

"It's a fact, Hen. He's struck out for the flats. We'll have to go back. We'll get more help, though, and have him anyhow."

Dick might have dropped both of them, even in the dark, but he preferred not to do so. That was not his style.

"Does yer think he's got ther clew?"

"Sure of it!" cried the colonel. "Didn't we see him looking at it when we got here and looked in at the window? You bet he's got it! But, it will cost him his life. He shall never follow up the trail."

"Right you is."

"We'll see about that," thought Dick. "I'm as good as a cart-load of dead men, my hearties, and you'll find it out so, too, if you fool around in this direction; you bet you will."

"Well, let's be off," exclaimed the colonel, "for we must find him and nip his game right in the bud."

"I'm with yer."

The two passed through the front room and on out into the storm, and Dick heard them running down the slope to the bridge.

As there was a big moon, objects without could be seen, in spite of the rain, and Dick could be sure of the direction the pair took.

"Well, now the battle has begun," Dick muttered, "and it seems it means war to the knife. Let 'er rip. I suppose there will be lively times up here directly, for I intend to hold the fort for a while at least. I must prepare for them."

His situation was rather a peculiar one. On one hand he was menaced by a mob of desperate ruffians, who were bent upon taking his life. On the other it was utterly impossible for him to search for the fortune in the darkness and storm, or to escape into the mountains. Great torrents of water were pouring down the mountain trails, making them all but impassable. Down below the flats were fast becoming submerged.

Suddenly a happy idea struck Dick, and he wondered why he had not thought of it before.

"By Jove! I'll do it!" he cried. "But, no time is to be lost."

#### CHAPTER XII.

##### OLD GRIZ THE CLOUD SCOUT.

His idea was to cut away the little bridge that spanned the creek.

That would cut off all communication with the flats, and he would be safe from attack for the present, and perhaps for a day or two.

He wasted no time in thinking about it, but prepared for business immediately.

Hanging to the wall in the kitchen was the ax: this he at once secured and discarding most of his clothes, in order to keep them dry, left the house and hastened down the bluff. It was raining its hardest, but he minded it not. Could he but cut away the bridge, he would thus baffle the enemy and be insured against attack for the night.

When he reached the flats he found that the water was several inches deep, and that it was running completely over the bridge, causing it to creak and groan dismally.

Dick did not wait upon ceremony, but began an attack upon the stringers immediately.

The bridge was supported by two of these stringers, one at each side, and they were long, oak poles, about four inches in diameter.

When two or three big chips had been taken out of one of the poles, it gave way, hanging only by a splinter. Dick soon found the other pole and gave that two or three good blows, when, with a sudden, spasmodic lurch, the bridge broke loose and was swept away down the stream.

Eureka! Victory was Dick's for the present. Barely had the bridge disappeared when Dick beheld Colonel Blood, with several men at his back, running through the water toward where it had been.

The sound of the ax had attracted their attention, and the colonel had guessed the truth immediately.

"Hurrah!" shouted Dick. "Come on and catch me, you rascals! You'll have to swim for it if you do."

Seizing the ax, he hastened up the bluff to escape any stray bullets, leaving his enemies to swear and rage over their defeat.

By the time Dick reached the house, drenched to the skin, the gang under Colonel Blood had reached the bank of the creek, and had found that their further advance was checked. There was positively no way for them to get across.

No boat or raft could be managed in that fu-

rious current, even had they had one, and to swim over was out of the question. No sane man would attempt it.

The yells of the gang, when they first discovered their defeat, were something fearful, and the men shook their fists at the Whitney house and swore vengeance upon it and Deadwood Dick together.

Finally they quieted down and a consultation was held.

The result was that the whole party started back for the heart of the camp, and made for the first saloon they came to.

As the danger was over for the time being, Deadwood Dick replenished the fire in the kitchen, and proceeded to dry the scant clothing he had worn out into the storm.

And while he waited for the fire to do its work in this respect, he curled himself up in the bunk he had made on the chairs and enjoyed a smoke.

And as he smoked he cogitated.

"The nearest place to get across the creek now is sixteen miles below," he mused. "They call it Scott's Ferry, I believe. Connection is made there with the railroad. The creek broadens there, but numerous tributaries running into it above, it is not likely to be any safer there than here."

"I hardly think Blood and his gang will make for that point, but they may. Or, there may be a nearer point that I know nothing about. As for me, I don't see that there is anything else for me to do than to stay where I am. If I only had some grub here, I opine I should find it right comfortable."

Dick had not relighted the lamp, principally owing to the fact that his shot had demolished the chimney, but the stove, with its doors open, gave out all the light he needed.

He had made his bed near the fire, and as he lay there a sense of drowsiness began to steal over him.

"This won't do," he muttered. "I must rouse up and dress before I do any sleeping. I mustn't be caught with my boots and belt off."

He got up, and his clothes being dry, dressed.

Then he went to the front door and looked out, taking a survey of the valley as well as he could in the very dim light.

A change had taken place. The entire flats was submerged, as he could see by the lights of the hotel on the opposite bluff, which reflected down upon the water. Not a light was to be seen in the gulch, and some of the houses seemed to have been swept away.

The flood had come now, and the dwellers on the flats had fled to the bluff, to get such shelter and accommodation as they could find there.

Old Rosy had taken as many into the hotel as could pay, or properly as many paying ones as he could take in, and then had thrown his big barn open to the rest of the crowd.

That barn came in handy now, and the entire populace of the flats was finally sheltered, while Old Rosy's rosy countenance glowed with satisfaction that he was able to be such a benefactor to the public at large.

After a few minutes' survey of the dark scene, Dick returned to the kitchen and lay down.

Drowsiness soon came over him again, and ere long he slept.

When he awoke it was with a start, and he sat bolt upright and looked around. Something had awakened him, but what was it?

At first he thought that he was alone, but soon he discovered that he was not, for comfortably seated in the corner on the opposite side of the dying fire was the huge cinnamon bear, Old Bob, taking his ease.

And Mr. Bruin had evidently been taking something else, too; something more convivial. The floor around him was scattered with broken bottles, and in a basket at his side, where he could help himself at will, were several full ones.

The bear had evidently been off on a foraging expedition, and knew the proper place to visit.

For several minutes Dick stared at the bear, not knowing what move to make. Bruin returned the stare with interest, but made no hostile demonstrations.

"He don't appear to be very ugly just now," Dick muttered. "Hard to tell what he might do, though. A bear and a lawyer are never to be trusted."

After meditating a few minutes, Dick concluded that he had better make a move to get upon his feet.

It was no go, however.

The minute Dick essayed to rise, Bruin rose, with a growl.

"Oh! fight is your racket, is it?" Dick exclaimed.

But it wasn't. Old Bob advanced and extended a paw in a friendly manner.

Dick shook the proffered paw, and they were friends.

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Bob," Dick observed. "I guess the recommend Miss Ollie gave you was straight. You seem like a good sort of fellow. Didn't bring anything along to eat, did you? I see you are well fixed for drink. Those bottles look suspiciously like Old Rosy's stock. I guess you've been paying him a visit. If I were at the hotel I wouldn't have any appetite at all, very likely, but now I feel as though I could go anything from a grizzly to a coyote. If you had showed fight, Bob, I might have enjoyed a steak off you. Unless you fill the larjer, old fellow, I am afraid I'll go hungry awhile."

Dick now heard a footstep outside, and drawing a revolver, he faced the door.

A man soon presented himself there, a burly six-foot mountaineer, with straggling red hair and a genial, good-natured countenance.

"Hello, here I!" he exclaimed, pleasantly enough. "What is ther diffikilty, be gosh? No 'casion ter shoot at me, stranger, so put up yer weepin. Who aire you, anyhow, stranger?"

"I am a refugee, at present," Dick responded. "Rented this house yesterday, and the hard rain forced me to occupy it to-night."

"Oh! this is your castle, then, be it? Sich bein' ther case, stranger, I won't intrude unless ye say so. I'm poor'y wet, though."

"Come right in," Dick invited, his weapon disappearing. "Any honest man is welcome to share this fire, and I reckon you are one."

"That's what I aim ter be, anyhow," the giant declared, as he advanced and took a seat by the stove. "What is yer name?"

"Dick Bristol."

"That's a good-soundin' name, be gosh. Where d'ye live?"

"Wherever night and day overtake me."

"Oh! you're a nomad, like myself, eh? Glad ter meet ye, darned if I ain't, fer I like yo a'ready, and it ain't often that I run across a feller that I take to at sight. D'ye ever take a nip, pard?"

"Yes, occasionally."

"Wal, here, help yerself," taking a bottle from the bear's basket and handing it over to Dick. "Help yourself to as much as ye want, fur there's more whar this came from. Old Bob here is a 'commodatin' cuss in this respeck. Never let's a feller go dry, if he has more'n he kin down hisself. By ther way, was it you that tied him up the other night?"

"Yes; that was before I had learned that he is tame."

"That's all right. I found him in that fix last night when I dropped in here to sleep. I set him free."

"Then it was you that had a fire here?"

"Yas. Yer see I come and go, and have got sev'ral stoppin'-places up and down ther range. I used ter know old man Whitney, when he lived here, and put up with him occasionally. Sence he died I have dropped in jest ther same."

"What is your name?" Dick asked.

"My name? Wal, thar, excuse me, stranger, for I meant ter exchange on sight. My name is Old Griz—Old Griz, ther Cloud Scout; known as such ther hull length and breadth of ther range."

That name seemed to recall something to Dick's mind. Where had he heard it? After a moment's reflection, he knew.

"Is your name Hiram Griswold?" he asked.

"That aire what it be, in full, stranger," the mountaineer admitted. "Whar did you git your grip onter it?"

"I thought so," said Dick. "We'll have a talk, and then I'll tell you how I guessed your handle."

"That suits me, furst rate."

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### WHIT'S HIDING PLACE FOUND.

THE tame bear, in the mean-time, had returned to his corner, and, after taking the neck from another bottle and guzzling its contents, spread out on the floor and almost immediately fell asleep.

"I would like to ask a few questions, Mr. Griswold," Dick began.

"Go right ahead, me boyee," the old man invited. "Don't call me mister, howsumever," he requested. "Call me jest Old Griz."

"All right. Well, you have said that you were acquainted with Mr. Whitney."

"Was I? Wal, I should cough up a cat if I wasn't. Why, we used to tramp together."

"He was a very singular man, I understand."

"Yas, I allow he was. No one knew any more about him than I did, and I didn't know much."

"Was he a miser?"  
"Wal, yes, I opine he might be called such. He saved up poooty close, and laid it 'most all by. While other fellers was goin' on a jamboree, Old Whit would salt his boddle, and content hisself at home here with his pipe and his quart jug. But, he was a square man."

"Was he crazy?"  
"Not much! Leave him alone fur that."

"Do you know much about his life?"  
"Not much. He had recently lost his wife when I fell in with him, and had put his gal away in a school."

"Know where he sent her?"  
"Way out East somewhere."

"You knew him before he built this house?"  
"I fell in with him about ther time that he struck it rich in this gulch, and as he did me a good service I didn't blow out on his find."

"And you have seen his daughter, of course?"  
"Yes, and a mighty fine gal she is, too. She's a lady, if therere ever was one born, and that I'm tellin' ye."

"I am aware of that," Dick agreed. "How did she like her home, when her father brought her here?"

"Not much, I reckon. But she didn't complain any, that I know of. Old Whit got more silent and crabbed than ever, after she kem home, though."

"When did he make his will?"  
"What will? What do you know about any will?"

The questions were put eagerly.  
"Why, his own will, of course. The will that you and Selim Dodd signed as witnesses."

"Hev you found that dokkymint?" the old ranger demanded.

"That's what I have."

"Bully fur you! Whar did yer find it?"  
Dick pointed to the place.

"Waal, I'll be durn," the giant drawled. "I've s'arched every nook and corner in this hull shebang, many's the night, and I had come to ther 'clusion that it was never ter be found."

"You're the ghost, then?"  
"I reckon I be."

"Do you believe the story of a buried fortune?"

"Do I! Why, young one, I have seen that fortune with my own eyes! Old Whit told me there was a quarter of a million in ther pile."

"Whew! that will be a big thing for his daughter."

"If she ever gits it."  
"And she will, for I have made up my mind to find it and restore it to her."

"You hev?"  
"I have. Did you know the contents of the will that you signed?"

"Yes."  
"The finder was appointed to be executor of the will."

"You have got it straight."  
"Well, I am the finder. The will is in my possession. Now, where do you imagine this money is planted?"

"I'd give my boot-heels ter know. I hev allus had ther idee that it is somewhere near where Old Whit was found dead."

"And where was that?"  
"By a big rock up ther mountain there to the north, or northwest."

"I believe you are right."  
"Why do ye?"

"Look at this."  
Dick took the map from his pockt and handed it over for inspection.

Old Griz took it and looked at it attentively for some minutes by the light of the fire, which had been replenished since his arrival.

"What do you make of it?" Dick asked.

"Wal, et looks plain. This house on it is Whit's. This hyar snake a-crawlin' up ther mountain is meant fur a trail, I take it. Hyar's a stump, and that is about half-way 'tween ther house and ther bowlder. That bowlder is where Old Whit was found dead. What this hyar stick is that's pokin' out from under ther bowlder, I can't say. Et looks like a temp'rary gallus fur a neck-tie party."

"Have you searched near this bowlder?"  
"Every inch' of ther ground."

"And found nothing?"  
"Nary find."

"Well, now, old man, will you help me to find this lost treasure and restore it to the girl?"

"Nothin' is nearer my heart than that same thing, me boyee."  
"Then put it therel!"

They shook hands.

"We will begin this work as soon as daylight comes," announced Dick, "rain or shine, for the Social Six of the Flats will be up here loaded for bear as soon as they get across the creek."

Dick went ahead, then, and told the old man everything, and they decided to make the search as soon as daylight came.

Dick finally rolled back into his bunk, and the old ranger taking the shaggy bear for his pillow, both were soon fast asleep.

Just at sunrise the old mountaineer wakened Dick.

The sky was clear, and but few clouds were to be seen. Down in the gulch a novel sight was presented. The flats were covered with water, about door-top deep to most of the houses, and it was noticed that there were not as many buildings as there had been.

On the opposite bluff the citizens were collected, looking down upon the scene of destruction and damage.

At one point, further to the east, and just where a rise of the flats made a little island near the slope, some men were seen hard at work making a raft.

Dick called his companion's attention to them.

"Them fellers is yer Social Six, and I'm bettin' on't," the old ranger declared. "They aire bound ter git over hyar if they kin do it."

"I agree with you, and I think we'd better make haste with our work."

"Come right erlong."

They turned and started up the trail in the direction indicated on the map, but they had not gone far when Old Bob, the bear, came running out after them and took the lead.

The route circled around to the right, and was a well-beaten path, as if it had much travel over it.

The travel, however, was probably the bear's.

At length the big bowlder was reached. It lay upon a rocky shelf, and was about twelve feet high, by the same in width and breadth, though it was by no means regular. Just in front of it, about three feet away, was a flat rock that might have served for a table, had it been high enough. It was only about two feet high.

Old Bob took a seat on this as soon as he reached it, as though the end of the journey was reached.

Deadwood Dick took out the compass and consulted it. He could see the house, and the bowlder was in a direct northwest course from it. At this bowlder the trail on the map ended, but at the bottom of the map was the key—

"\* 2 Deg. N. of N. W.\*"

"Have you ever gone any further than this rock?" Dick asked.

"Yas, a leetle furder all around."

"Well," consulting the compass, "we will go ahead a little distance in a direct course two-degrees north of northwest, and see what will come of it."

"Lead ther way, and I'll foller right on."

Dick took range at a tall pine some distance away, and they started forward.

They had almost reached the pine when Dick uttered an exclamation.

"Eureka!"

"What yer mean?" demanded Old Griz.

"I have found it! I understand it all now. Look here!"

Dick pointed to a crevice between two rocks, in which lay a long oak pole. It had one end, the big end, sharpened in the shape of a crow-bar, and the upper side of it was bruised as though it had been used as a lever.

"What is it?" questioned Griz.

"Don't you see? It is the stick that is shown on this map. That big bowlder is to be pried up."

"Be gosh! but I b'lieve you're right, young one!"

Without further words they took up the pole and carried it back to the rock, and when they came near the bear got down from his place on the flat stone.

Dick put the stick across this flat stone to use it for a fulcrum, and slipped the end of it into a niche that was discovered in the bowlder in just the right place.

"Ye've hit it, me boyee, be gosh!" cried Old Griz. "But, hello! look hyar at Old Bob, will ye?"

As soon as the lever was ready, the bear had stepped to the face of the bowlder and put his paws under it, as if actually to give his help in the lift.

"We've struck it, sure," cried Dick. "Catch hold here, now, and we'll see what we can do."

They lent their combined weights to the lever,

while Old Bob really lifted with all his strength. But the bowlder did not budge.

With a grunt the bear dropped down and trotted around behind the rock, and with his paws pushed away a stone that lay close in under it on that side. That removed, Bruin trotted back again to supervise proceedings.

The two men applied themselves to the lever, and this time their purpose was accomplished. The bowlder tipped back, as though set on a fulcrum, until its front along the ground line was lifted about a yard. Then it moved no further. Underneath the great rock there was revealed to Dick's and Old Griz's astonished gaze, a small cave or crypt!

#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### THE SKELETON HAND.

DEADWOOD DICK and Old Griz jumped off the lever and looked in.

They took good care not to get their heads under the bowlder, however, for fear that it might drop back and catch them.

Old Bob, the bear, had quietly resumed his seat on the flat stone.

The hole under the bowlder was not large, and seemed to be a natural hole in the under rock, over which the bowlder had fallen at some time or other. The bowlder was so balanced, at two points, that it could be moved as has been shown.

In the bottom of the hole was seen a tin box, but its lid was raised and it was empty.

"Eternel hills!" cried Old Griz, "ther boddle is gone!"

"Gone!" echoed Dick.

"Yas, fur that is ther box that Old Whit kept it in."

Just then Deadwood Dick made a discovery. Right at the edge of the hole, and just where the sharp corner of the bowlder had rested, lay the skeleton of a human hand. It was a left hand, and on a finger was a big, heavy gold ring of peculiar pattern.

Under the hand, as though it had been clutching it, was a folded paper.

The find explained itself. Whoever had found the fortune, and carried it off, had left his hand behind. The big bowlder had come down and cut it off as cleanly as an ax could have done.

"What in blazes hev ye found, boyee?" demanded Old Griz.

"The hand of a thief, and perhaps murderer," Dick answered.

Removing the ring from the fleshless finger, he put it into his pocket, and wrapping the hand in a paper, put that into another pocket. Then he looked at the folded paper that had been found.

Opening it he read:

"TO THE FINDER:—This money, two hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars, will be found in three packages. The largest package contains two hundred thousand, and belongs to my daughter, according to my will. The next in size contains twenty thousand dollars, which belongs to the faithful finders and executors of my will. The smallest package holds eight thousand, a free gift to the finder of this money, if said finder carry out my wishes respecting it. The eye of God is upon you!"

"JASON WHITNEY."

"Et war a big sum," mused Old Griz, "but et aire gone now, I opine."

"Not if there's a dollar of it to be had," declared Dick. "Here's the clew to the thief," he cried, displaying the ring, "and with it I'll hunt him to the ends of the earth!"

"Bully fur you."

"Shall we shut the bowlder down again?"

"Ef we kin."

They took away the lever and tried to pull the stone down to place, but it refused to move. Seeing their actions, though, Old Bob got down from his seat, went around behind the rock, and in a moment the bowlder toppled over into its place.

"Ha!" cried Dick, "that explains how the thief lost his hand. The bear has sprung this trap on him! Lucky for him, or unlucky, perhaps, that it didn't catch his head instead of his hand."

"I opine you're right, boyee."

This bowlder was out of sight from the flats and from the hotel on the opposite bluff, and no one there could know of the discovery that had been made.

Dick carried the oak lever back to the place where it had been found, while Old Griz removed every trace he could of the work they had been doing, and when Dick rejoined him they returned to the house.

Going through to the front door they took another survey of the flats.

The men at work on the raft were still busy,

and the crowd was still on the bluff. The situation remained about the same.

Old Griz opened his haversack and rummaged through it, bringing out a piece of dried venison and some bull-cracker biscuits.

"Et ain't much of a spread," he apologized, "but et is the best I kin do. I reckon that about the toughest article ter find around this camp is provender. This meat aire pooty hard, and these crackers is heavy enough ter fell a ox. Now, et ain't no use o' talkin', that aire spread-out won't do for us. I could eat a whole side of b'ar, myself, and no doubt you could; and as fur Bob, hyar, he's never off his feed,—eh, Bob?"

"It isn't much of a banquet, that's so," Dick owned, "but it's better than none."

"We'll make et do, anyhow, till we git over ther crick. Fall right in and help yerself, pardner."

"You think we can get over the creek, then?"

"I should cough up a catamount ef we can't."

"How will we do it? If we can get over from this side, why can't they cross from the other side without a raft?"

"Ther odds is ther difference, me boyee, so with all respect I'll have ter ask yer ter wait and see."

"All right, Griz; I'll do it."

As soon as their meal was ended, and washed down with some beer that was found in Old Bob's supply-basket, they set off down the creek, the old ranger leading the way and Dick following with Old Rosy's valued umbrella.

Old Griz carried the ax with him, and when they had gone about a mile they came to a place where Dick saw at a glance what the old man's plan was.

Here the creek ran in a narrow, rocky gorge. It was narrower than above, and the water was running through with a roar like a cataract. On the south side was nothing but barren rock, while here on the north side were several big trees.

Stepping up to one of these, Old Griz buried the blade of the ax in its trunk, exclaiming:

"See me plan now, boyee?"

"Yes, I see," said Dick. "Go for it, and when you get tired I'll take a whack at it."

Old Griz fell to work and worked faithfully until the tree was about half cut down, when he handed the ax over to Dick.

Dick set to work on the opposite side, and in due time the tree fell with a crash, bridging the gorge.

"Eureka!" Dick cried. "Now we are all right."

Old Bob, the bear, was the first to cross, and after him went the others.

When the opposite bank was reached, they turned their steps toward the Flats, and set out for the big hotel at a brisk walk.

Arriving finally where they could look down upon the flooded flats, they saw that the raft-builders had just completed their craft, and were about setting out on it for the opposite shore.

"Go ahead, my hearties," laughed Dick, "and much good may it do you."

"Ef yer find us thar, come back and let us know about it," put in the old mountaineer.

When they reached the hotel Old Rosy greeted Dick heartily.

"I'm glad ter see that you're safe," he cried. "Had begun ter think that you had got drowned."

"Here I am, all right, you see," Dick responded; "and here's your umbrella. I am greatly obliged for it."

"Yas, I was somewhat worried about that, I allow. How did yer cross ther crick?"

Dick explained, and said:

"I would like to see you in private for a moment, Mr. Rosedale; I want to ask you something of importance."

This was said in a low tone.

"You kin ask it right here," said Rosy; "no one kin hear."

Dick looked about, and seeing that no one was paying any attention to him or the landlord, took the ring from his pocket and asked:

"Did you ever see this before?"

"I allow I hev," the landlord drawled as he looked at it.

"Well, whose was it?"

"Et belonged to Sherwood, of Carson, ther man you've heerd me mention."

"Hol it does, eh? He's the father of the young lady that's boarding here, I believe."

"Ther same."

"Not here now, is he?"

"Oh, no, he don't come out often. He's in biz in Carson."

"You said he's rich."

"Mighty rich, I take it; but he's in business jest ther same."

"I wonder how he lost this ring. I found it up in the hills this morning."

"Haven't ye heard? Why, he was out one day, up in ther hills, when he got a fall and a big stone fell a-top of him cuttin' off his left hand slick and clean."

"Is it possible? When did this happen?"

"Wal, le's see: et was about the time that Old Whitney died, I think. Anyhow, it was afore Sherwood come into ther fortune that a relation died and left him, fer the boys remarked that it was lucky he did git ther windfall, after his accident."

"Well, don't mention that I have found this, will you? Keep it to yourself. I'm a-going to Carson, and I'll see the man myself."

"Oh! I'll not mention it, if ye don't want me to."

"And I don't. By the way, where is that young man from New York?"

"I give it up."

"What! is he not here?"

"Nary. Found him gone this mornin', though he'd left money in his room to pay his bill, and more."

"That's strange; I wanted to see him."

"There's somethin' stranger than that. Miss Ollie has disappeared, too. She ain't ter be found, and her boss is gone from ther barn."

"When did you miss her?"

"This mornin'. And there's somethin' about it all that is funny to me."

"What is that?"

"That feller bought a hoss last night, and put it in my barn. His hoss is gone, too. My opine is that him and ther gal has gone off together."

"What leads you to think that?"

"Don't know what they said, eh?"

"Nary."

"Well, say nothing. Now, I want to buy your two horses. Name your figure."

"But I don't want to sell, and—"

"Yes, you do. You have got a price on them. Name that price, and I'll count out the cash."

Old Rosy saw that Dick meant business, so he named a figure—one plenty big enough, and Dick paid the money.

Half an hour later Dick and Hiram Griswold set out for Carson City, and as they rode away from the hotel a shouting was heard, and looking back they saw that the Whitney house was all ablaze. The Social Six had reached it.

#### CHAPTER XV.

##### RECOVERED!

THE handsomest office in one of the finest business buildings in the city was occupied by Sherwood & Co.

This firm carried on a banking, broking, and real-estate business.

Sherwood was a man of fifty, portly, and showing every sign of high living. He had but one hand, his left hand being missing above the wrist.

This man was in his private office one morning, when two strangers entered.

One was a young man, handsome, and of powerful build.

The other was older, and with a stern expression of face.

"You are Mr. Sherwood?" the younger man asked.

"That is my name, sir," was the response.

"I have come to restore something to you, something that you lost not a very long time ago."

Sherwood looked slightly puzzled.

"What is it?" he asked.

"It is this."

As he spoke the young man laid a skeleton hand upon the desk before the rich banker, a hand upon the third finger of which was a heavy ring!

With a cry of horror the man shrunk back in his chair, his eyes dilating in guilty fear.

"What is this? Where did you get it?" he demanded.

"It is the hand of a thief and murderer," was the firm response. "It was found in the cave from which Jason Whitney's fortune was taken by you!"

The banker was white to the lips, and he trembled like a leaf of aspen.

"Who are you?" he gasped.

"I am Deadwood Dick, detective."

"Heavens! I am lost!"

"Officer," said Dick, turning to his companion, "arrest this man. I charge him with the murder of Jason Whitney, and with the theft of his fortune."

"It is a lie!" the banker cried, springing up. "It is a lie! I didn't murder him! It was Buck Blood that did that. It was—"

"Whatever you say now will be used against you," the officer warned, as he laid hands on his prisoner.

"I don't care if it is," the desperate man cried. "You have got this fast on me, on account of that hand, but I won't be alone. There's Blood, he killed the old man; and there's Burdeck, Kendeth, and Maltravers, all big guns at the Flats now, they are in the same boat."

"I will attend to them," declared Dick, as he noted the names.

Sherwood was soon lodged in jail, and the city rung with the exciting news.

Bristol lost no time. He must reach Rosedale Flats again before the news of this arrest could get there.

He procured warrants for the men he wanted, and the help of two county officers, and they set out immediately.

Old Griz remained at Carson awaiting their return.

Dick was anxious to learn what had become of Ollie Whitney and Wynd Omar, but he had no time to hunt for them now. Other things, too important, were pressing upon him.

It was night when he reached the Flats, in disguise. The flats proper were still submerged, and all the citizens were on the bluff.

The three determined men went to work in earnest, and soon had their objects under watch. They wanted to arrest them together if they could.

Soon they were favored. Colonel Blood, Burdeck, Kendeth, and Maltravers—the husband of the Mrs. Maltravers who was the leading lady of the select circle, by the way—all entered the hotel bar-room and sat down to play at cards.

Waiting until they had fairly begun, Deadwood Dick and his men went up to the table at which they were seated, covered them with their weapons, and Dick said:

"Up with your hands, every man of you, for you are our prisoners."

Their surprise can hardly be imagined.

"What means this outrage?" Colonel Blood thundered.

"It means that you are arrested for the murder of Jason Whitney," was the hard answer. "Up with your hands, or you die where you sit."

The hands of the trembling four went up.

In a few brief seconds the officers had handcuffs on them.

"Who in thunder are you?" the colonel demanded.

"I am Deadwood Dick, at your service," answered Dick, and he snatched off his false beard and made a bow to his prisoners.

"But, you are barking up the wrong tree this time," the colonel protested. "You have made the biggest mistake of your life. You haven't any proof against us."

For answer Dick drew from his pocket the skeleton hand.

The colonel's jaw dropped.

All the others, too, protested their innocence, but when told that Sherwood had confessed, they wilted.

Without delay the stage was got out for an extra trip, with fresh horses, and the officers with their prisoners set out for Carson.

Dick had asked Old Rosy if he had heard anything from Ollie yet, but he had not. Where she could be he could not guess, but he believed she had married the young stranger. Since hearing his story, Dick saw that it was more probably love than fear that had actuated Ollie in wanting to keep out of his sight.

Arriving at their destination, the prisoners were lodged in jail, and next day had their hearing.

The result of that was, that they were returned to jail to await trial.

Deadwood Dick took steps to recover the stolen fortune. He employed good lawyers, and injunctions were granted against the property of the prisoners pending their trial.

When their trials came off they were readily convicted, immediately after which, Sherwood and Colonel Blood committed suicide, but the others felt the penalty of the law.

Jason Whitney's fortune was taken out of their estates all around, in just proportions, and it was turned over to Deadwood Dick, as executor.

The will could not be doubted, as Hiram Griswold was on hand to swear to his signature, and the proof against the prisoners had been all that was needed.

It came out that Blood and Sherwood had been trying to find Whitney's hiding-place for his money for some time. They had already disposed of Selim Dodd, by means of poison. They watched Whitney, and one day came upon him just as he was coming out from under the big boulder. They fell upon him, and Blood applied chloroform to him until he was dead. While he was doing that, Sherwood got the money out of the hole, and he was just reaching in for a paper he had dropped, when the rock came down and cut off his hand.

There was no doubt, as it appeared, but that the bear had tripped the stone, and had afterward put a wedge behind it so that it could not be moved again! And the lever, that was not in sight at the time, showing that Whitney must have taken it to its hiding-place immediately after opening the cave, knowing that he would not need it to put the boulder back into place.

About the time that Sherwood's hand was cut off, Burdeck, Kendeth, and Maltravers came upon the scene. Kendeth was a doctor, and he cared for the wounded arm; when that was done a division of the spoils followed.

Efforts were made to get the lost hand, but all in vain. The boulder was not to be moved, and all believed that it never would be, for the secret had died with Old Whit. For fear that the discovery might be made, however, the band of the Social Six was organized, to frighten off any who might evince too great a desire to find the lost treasure. To Hen Hoon and his gang, however, whom they had nothing to fear from, they gave all encouragement, knowing that they would keep others from the field. But there was another reason, for Colonel Blood had found that Hen Hoon knew more than the others thought he did.

The court promptly awarded twenty thousand of the fortune to Deadwood Dick, and eight thousand to Hiram Griswold, in accordance with the dead man's request; that being considered as a clause to the will.

Deadwood Dick, however, was required to give bonds for the discharge of the duty of executor, which he promptly did.

Weeks had passed, and nothing had been heard of Ollie Whitney, nor had Wynd Omar been seen.

Deadwood Dick had a detective out after a clew, however, and finally it was ascertained that a couple answering the descriptions given had taken an Eastward train at Scott's Ferry on the morning after the flood. This was all that could be learned.

Their work at Carson being done, Dick and Old Griz parted company, the old ranger going to Rosedale Flats, getting the bear, Old Bob, and setting out down the range, while Dick started East.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE SECRET MADE KNOWN.

DEADWOOD DICK'S destination was New York.

The morning of his arrival there was brisk and bracing, and of just the sort to invite a man who had been riding on the cars for days and nights together to stretch his legs.

Ordering his baggage transferred to a leading hotel, the Independent Detective set out to go there on foot, and by the time he arrived and had taken a bath he felt like enjoying a hearty breakfast. This he ordered sent to his room, and when he had finished it, and had topped it off with a fine cigar, he set out to begin the business that had brought him to the East.

He wanted to find Wynd Omar and Ollie Whitney.

Consulting a Directory, he failed to find the name of Omar in it.

"Was it an assumed name after all?" he mused. "Was the fellow lying to me? I hate to believe that, for I summed him up as square. What has he done with that poor girl? I will find him, if I have to scour the world."

Balked in his first move, Dick proceeded to make another.

Visiting one of the leading advertising agencies, he paid to have the following notice inserted in many of the leading papers of the country:

### "FOUND: A FORTUNE!"

"The lost fortune of Rosedale Flats has been discovered. Owner can have same by applying to me.

"RICHARD BRISTOL,  
"Hotel B—k,  
"New York City."

Dick had no doubt but that this would sooner or later meet the eye of the lost girl, if she were alive; but he was impatient to be doing something more to find her.

Soon the right idea came to his mind.

He knew that the girl had been at school at Newburg for some years, and reasoned that it would be strange if he could not learn something about her there. That is, something as to the whereabouts of her relatives, if she had any living. It was possible that she had gone to some of her father's people.

Without delay he set out for that town.

His first inquiry was for the schools of the city, and having made a list of them, he set about visiting them.

The first one he tried happened to be the one he wanted. Inquiring for Miss Olivia Whitney, he was told no such person had ever been there. Then he asked about Fay Fenton. This proved to be the right clew. Ollie had had an assumed name at the school.

Being told that such a person had been there for some years, but had been taken away about two years before, Dick began careful inquiries. At first, like Wynd Omar, he could gain no information whatever, but when he had told his story, and explained why he wanted to find the girl, the ancient dames of the school became more communicative. He was told that the girl had been placed in the school by a Mrs. Wyndham, of New York, who always paid her bills.

Armed with Mrs. Wyndham's address, Dick returned to New York.

Hunting up the place to which he had been directed, he found it to be a palatial residence on one of the principal avenues.

Inquiring for Mrs. Wyndham, he was shown into a handsome parlor, and in a little time the lady entered.

She was a handsome woman, apparently no more than thirty years of age, though in truth she was four years older.

As soon as Dick began to make known his business, she began to grow strangely nervous, as he noticed, and he mentally told himself that there was a skeleton in the closet somewhere.

"Why do you want to find this young lady?" she asked.

"Because," Dick replied, "I have found the fortune of Jason Whitney, and as I am the executor of his will, I desire to turn the money over to his daughter, whom I know this Fay Fenton to be."

The woman was pale to the lips, and trembling.

"I must see you in private, sir," she said.

"Come with me into this other room."

Dick followed her into an adjoining room, and the lady closed the door.

"How much do you know about this girl?" she asked, when they were seated.

"Much," Dick answered, significantly.

He meant to learn much, if he could.

"Perhaps you know all," the woman said.

"I believe I do, though perhaps not," was the response. "Perhaps what I know you would not want the young lady to hear."

"It is as I feared," the woman gasped, as she sunk back. "But, you will keep the secret, will you not?" she asked, eagerly.

"Tell me the whole story," Dick responded, "and I will keep it sacredly. I am a detective, and must get at the bottom facts."

"I will trust you," the unhappy woman declared. "The girl must never know that she is not the child of Jason Whitney."

Deadwood Dick was surprised. How could this be, after the proof he had found in the old Bible?

"Olivia is my own child," the woman confessed, in a low, earnest tone. "No more need be said. My sister, Deborah, older than myself, adopted her, and gave her her own name. She was the wife of this Jason Whitney. They entered her name in their family record as their own offspring."

"That record is in my possession," said Dick.

"I am glad of that. The girl must have it. She will never suspect the truth. Well, I paid my sister and her husband for their services, and when my sister died in 'seventy-eight, I placed the child in a school at Newburg. She remained there until I saw, or thought I saw, a chance to give her a position in life, and at the same time have her near me; for you cannot know how my heart has longed for her all these years!"

"At the age of twenty I married Roger Wyndham. He was a widower, and had a son, Omar, who was just half my age."

Deadwood Dick here guessed the truth.

"As this son grew up, I resolved that he should wed my child, if I could in any way bring it about. I sent the girl West to Whitney, and then began to lay my scheme. Whitney idolized the child, I knew, and would almost have laid down his life for her. I could trust him. All my correspondence with him was done through a third party, one Selim Dodd. I learned that Whitney had amassed a big fortune, which he declared should all be left to Olivia.

"I pretended to have a dream. I told it to Omar Wyndham. It was to the effect that at a place in the West called Rosedale Flats was a girl who was destined to become his wife. She was thought to be poor, I said, but was in truth immensely rich. As the Wyndham fortune had been shrinking, I believed this would add weight to my plan. I repeated the lie daily, until it had produced a marked impression upon the young man, and then I induced him to go and see a fortune-teller. In the mean time I had posted her and provided her with a photograph of my child. He went, and the impression she made on him was wonderful. He set out for the West immediately."

"Since his return with his bride—"

"Ha!" exclaimed Dick, "he married her then?"

"Oh, yes. He found her at a hotel out there, where she was employed. She would not see him at first, but finally he got the better of her in that, and he then discovered that Ollie Whitney was none other than Fay Fenton, a young lady he had met at Newburg, (a secret he had kept,) and whom he loved. It was the photograph that had sent him West in such haste. She loved him, too, and it was for that reason that she wanted to keep out of his sight. She feared he would scorn her, finding that she had had an assumed name, and that she was poor and a servant.

"He soon reassured her, however, urged her to marry him, and she agreed. As soon as the storm broke—it had been storming hard for two days, they took horses and set out for the nearest railroad point. There they were wed, and started East immediately. They are in this house now."

"Good!" cried Dick. "I must see them."

"Wait, wait," the woman cried earnestly, and she dropped upon her knees at his feet with clasped hands. "You must keep this secret. You must swear by your honor as a man that you will keep it. Do not let it be known that I—that she—"

"Have no fears, madam," Dick reassured. "I will never reveal the truth. It is not necessary. This secret shall die with you and me."

"You swear it?"

"I do, solemnly."

"It is enough. As soon as I have calmed myself a little we will return to the parlor, and I will call Omar and Ollie down."

#### CHAPTER XVII.

##### THE HAPPY ENDING.

WHEN Omar Wyndham and his happy bride entered the parlor, they both greeted Deadwood Dick heartily.

"Pardon the deception I played upon you, in regard to my name," Omar apologized.

"No need to mention it," Dick waived.

When greetings had been exchanged, Dick told his story, and it need not be said that it was attentively listened to.

All the facts being known to the reader, the story need not be quoted.

Two pleasant hours were passed, and finally, being urged so earnestly, Dick accepted the invitation to become a guest for a few days.

In order to turn the fortune over to Ollie, it was necessary for her to go West, and in a week the party started.

It consisted of Deadwood Dick, Omar and Ollie, and Mrs. Wyndham and a companion.

Arriving at Carson, the business was promptly done, and the bank where the fortune was deposited transferred the amount to Ollie's credit to a bank in New York.

The business settled, the party paid a visit to Rosedale.

The place had assumed its old-time appearance, and Old Rosy was at his post as usual.

He and his wife received Ollie with open arms.

The "elite coterie," ah, where were they? They were gone. That they knew of Ollie's change of fortune was certain, for the papers gave much space to the story.

Remaining there a few days, the party, except Deadwood Dick, returned East.

The strongest friendship was expressed on parting with Dick, and he was urged to visit the Wyndham home whenever he happened to be in New York.

When the stage started that bore them away, Dick turned to Old Rosy and said:

"Now, old fellow, I'll take that box of cigars, if you please, and will settle down here long enough to smoke them up."

And Old Rosy, remembering his bet, promptly handed the box over the bar.

THE END.

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